



Class _____

Book _____

1012

David P. Whitney.



CHILDE HARVARD;

A

ROMANCE OF CAMBRIDGE.

BY

SEÑOR ALGUNO.

Imagination; honorable aims;
Free commune with tho choir that cannot die;
Science and song; delight in little things;
The buoyant child surviving in the man.

S. T. COLERIDGE.

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DEDICATION.

Nor with the vain hope of adding any new glory to those, who already stand high on the summit of the Popocatepetl of North American literature ; not to forestall any favorable review, which he may not merit ; not to deprecate any sarcastic criticisms, which every work deserves that is not perfect ; — but simply to testify his unfeigned respect and admiration of those men, who have justly rendered classic ground, the world over, the scenes which the following Poem describes ; —

IT IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

TO THE

EDITOR OF THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW

AND HIS ILLUSTRIOUS COADJUTORS ;

SECONDLY — TO THE

MEMBERS OF THE CLASS OF 1848,

OF THE UNIVERSITY AT CAMBRIDGE,

IN WHOSE GRADUATING YEAR THE CHILDE WAS BORN ;

AND, THIRDLY — TO

CHILDE HARVARD HIMSELF ;

BY THE AUTHOR,

SEÑOR ALGUNO.



PRELUDE.

OHÙSHMYCHILD.

THE shades of night had fallen fast,
As through the Cambridge streets there past
A maiden, with a basket swung
Upon her arm ; but still she sung,
Ohùshmychild !

Her brow was sad ; her eye beneath
Flashed like a falchion from its sheath,
And, like a whispering angel's, rung
The accents of that unknown tongue,
Ohùshmychild !

In Harvard halls she saw the light
Of students' chambers glimmering bright ;
Onward she pressed through dew and dust,
Still whispering to her helpless trust,
Ohùshmychild !

“ Try not the pass ! ” the watchman said ;
“ Bright stars are gazing overhead,
Dark Charles's torrent is deep and wide ! ”
And low that whispering voice replied,
Ohùshmychild !

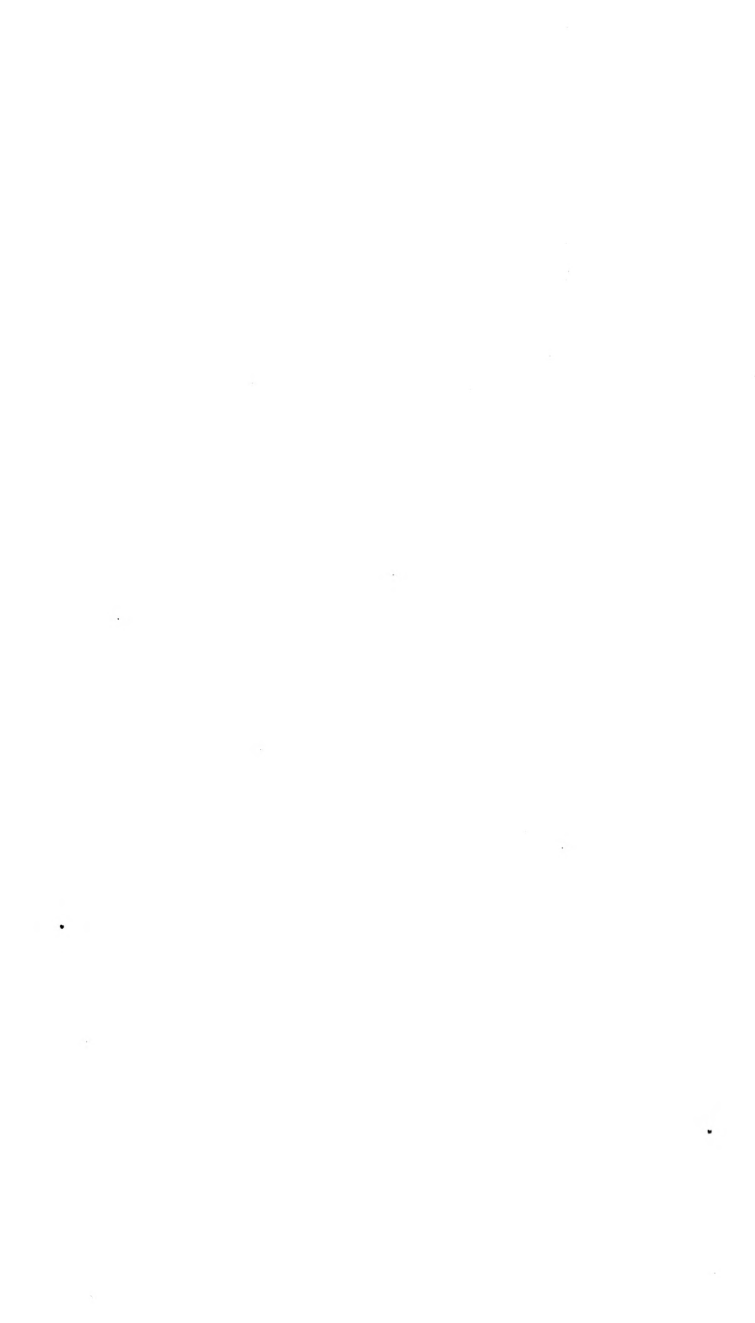
“ O, stay,” the Goody said, “ and rest
Thy weary head upon this breast ! ”
A tear stood in her bright blue eye,
But still she answered with a sigh,
Ohùshmychild !

“ Beware the Proctor's watchful eye !
Beware the awful Faculty ! ”
This was “ Ma'am D——'s ” last good-night ;
A voice replied, far out of sight,
Ohùshmychild !

The ghost of Harvard on the blast
Wailed as the mournful maiden passed ;
The church bell sounded ; with a jump
She whispered, hastening to the pump,
Ohùshmychild !

There, in the cold and silent shade,
Her weeping load she weeping laid ;
But, ere she went, she kissed the child,
And murmured low, in accents wild,
Ohùshmychild !

Again she turned, and bending o'er
The babe, she kissed it as before ;
But when a footstep sounded far,
Her voice fell like a falling star,
Ohùshmychild !



CHILDE HARVARD;

A

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ROMANCE OF CAMBRIDGE.



CANTO I.

“ When the deserted babe is left to lie,
Far from the woful mother’s lost caress,
Under the broad cope of the solemn sky.”

MRS. NORTON’S “NEW-BORN CHILD.”

“ Childe (Harvard) was he hight ; but whence his name
And lineage long ? * * * *
Suffice it, that perchance they were of fame,
And had been glorious in another day ;
But one sad losel soils a name for aye.”

BYRON’S “CHILDE HAROLD.”

I.

NANCY, ’t is true, was a voluptuous girl :

It proved her ruin, (though perhaps ’t were better
Not to have told of it, before the whirl

Of love’s begiddyng maelstrom slowly let her
Down to destruction, and “ the gentle reader ”
Into the marvellous secret ; yet to have freed her,

II.

At first, from all surmisings, is, I fancy, —
And even herself would willingly confess it, —
The very fairest way to treat frail Nancy :
Besides, a tale, that all good men may bless it,
Should have a moral end ; this tale of mine
Has such, and written in the second line ;

III.

It proved her ruin.) How this came to pass,
Attended by what wonderous circumstances,
How the great secret was divulged, alas !
And how Childe Harvard, left to take his chances,
Screamed under the college pump, I sing. — Beware,
Maidens, of students, as you would a bear !

IV.

Heaven forbid that I should insinuate
Any thing that 's at all derogatory
To any of the Students of the great
“ University at Cambridge ! ” No ! her glory
Shines like a constellation off Cape Hope,
Seen through the Observatory telescope.

V.

(Which telescope the Faculty have voted
That every student, before he graduate,
May look through *once*, two minutes being devoted
To each ; wherein, 't is said, they speculate,
On all the stary host, excepting Venus,
Which star they deem ruled by an evil genius.)

VI.

I said, beware of Students! not pretending,
Dear girls, that there is any the least connection
Between them and this tragedy's mournful ending :
No, never! — With what virtuous circumspection
They walk, (no less from love than self-restraint,)
Demands an Everett's classic brush to paint,

VII.

Not mine. But I advise you not so much for
Your sakes — and yet I would not hurt you, no,
Not for the world, nor all that misers clutch, nor
Bury in vaults, nor spoils of Mexico,
When Polk victorious, like an ocean billow,
Returns, — “ Scott-free ” — with volunteers and Pillow —

VIII.

But girls, beware of them for their own sakes. —

(And can I urge a stronger argument ?) —

Oh ! if you only knew, what fools it makes

Of students, when their thoughts have once been bent
On you — that is, when you have caught them by
“ Bishops,” words, smiles, and a *galvanic* eye —

IX.

And all those other charms, you girls know how to

Display with such a marvellous effect,

That, should the luckless student only bow to

You, as you sail along the street direct-
Ly by him, bowing back in turn and blushing,
It sends the blood through every artery gushing

X.

Up to his brain ; where, like *delirium tremens*,

It sets the thoughts in eddying whirlpools whirling !
Homeward he rushes, and the strength of three men’s

Arms could not hold him, for the imaged girl in
His eye, stamped on the retina, stays there still,
Like the sun’s image, contrary to his will,

XI.

And drives him mad. Now, girls, in that condition,
You must know, 't is impossible to pursue
His studies: even to save him from perdition
He cannot get "the advance," forgets "the review,"
And wails in righteous indignation then;
"*Oh! curse of woman on her fellow-men!*"

XII.

Nor is this all. When that delirium passes
Away, exhaustion follows, and a *lassitude*,
(This word was probably derived from *lasses*,)
And on his sofa he takes recumbent attitude,
And gently falls asleep, wasting his time
In effeminate dreams, voluptuous and sublime.

XIII.

Perhaps it may not be *amiss*; (it was though
A *miss*, I dreamed about, *mysterious* as it
May seem to those who know me) it will also
Make "the world better" — as the good man has it —
"For our having lived," and so forth, if we clearly
Relate a dream; 't will please the ladies dearly: —

XIV.

Well, then, when I was an under-graduate,
 (For I was young once ; all old people have been,)
Studying at a University in the State
 Of Massachusetts, (that word 's like a *spavin*
To any sort of feet ; it spoils a verse's,
Hissing, as when a tailor his " goose " immerses ;)

XV.

" I had a dream, which was not all a dream ;
 'T was partly real and partly 't was a vision ;
Or 't may be, — since " things are not as they seem," —
 That my freed spirit stalked through fields Elysian,
While this my body slept ; as Paul was " caught up
To the third Heavens," (but how he never thought up,)

XVI.

" And heard unspeakable things ;" and therefore never
 Spoke them to men : perhaps the dialect
Of angels somewhat puzzled the old Hebrew, — clever
 Although he was, — so that he could 'nt detect
Their meaning. — *My* dream was of angels, though
One *fallen*, the other born down here — below :

XVII.

That is ; one of them was a student (and they,
Of course, are “devils ! young devils ;” now devils surely
Are angels fallen, which proves as clear as day,
That this point is forever fixed securely ;
One *was* an angel) the other was a creature
Of most angelic form and heavenly feature :

XVIII.

Men call such, angels, houris, diamonds, flowers ;
In fine, they call them almost every thing,
That dwells on earth, or in the fancied bowers
Of bliss ; that walks, that soars on bird-like wing
In air or ether, or cleaves the crystal waters —
I call them simply Eve’s and Adam’s daughters,

XIX.

Angels of Earth ; and, when I please to flatter,
Sometimes I tell them that they look like me ;
Which tickles them so, that they begin to scatter
Praises and compliments ; “ Oh ! yes, you be
A perfect Apollo ! splendid ! no mistake ! ” —
And think ; “ what a glorious husband he would make ! ”

XX.

'*T*is strange how I can read the thoughts of people, —
And more especially the thoughts of lasses : —
I never pretend to ; no — but when a steeple
Towers up above the trees, it needs no glasses
To *guess* that there is a meeting-house below
Long ere we see the people come, or go.

XXI.

I never intended to compare, of course,
Ladies to steeples, nor to meeting-houses, —
And yet they are a most attractive force
Church-ward, when young and not yet turned to spouses :
Earth-angel-peacocks, they one day in seven
Draw wayward souls into *the road* to Heaven !

XXII.

'T was early Tuesday noon, — I should have said so
At first, before I spoke about the dream ;
Strange that I did 'nt, because I always dread so
To tell that vision ('t would make an angel scream !)
That I should, surely, gladly interpose
Some stanzas 'twixt the first act and the close : —

XXIII.

'T was early Tuesday noon, the second of May
Over Harvard halls — that antique home of science
In this New World. 'T was Exhibition day ! —
How my heart swells to bid the world defiance,
Even at the thought of those young, pregnant hours
Of bliss, when earth itself seemed paved with flowers !

XXIV.

Long had the crowd been gathering, and at last
"The Chapel" was crammed ; the bell has ceased, and lo !
The "Brigade Band" pours forth a melodious blast
Above the pulpit ; — now with lofty, slow
And measured tread, like warrior-gods extolled,
In stalk the Faculty, the young, the old,

XXV.

The short, the tall, the lean, the fat, the learn'd
And . . . took their seats, like other men ; for they
Must sit, of course. The eagle, who hath spurn'd
The nebulous fields beneath his wings, all day,
Descends at night ; even thus, say once a quarter,
The Faculty sit down, just where they ought to,

XXVI.

In "Freshman seats," and even condescend
To bow to students! — Now the music stopping,
Silence prevails; such as, when earth shall end,
Will probably precede; even the dropping
Of a pin, nay! I had almost ventured to
Say, you might hear "the voice of conscience" too. —

XXVII.

But hark! breezes, be still! and all ye birds, —
Or we will have you "taken up" for *treeson*! —
Listen! O list! — Those were melodious words! —
Sweet sound! such as the soul would gladly seize on
And hold forever in its tympanum shell! —
'T would charm the gods, and soothe the shades of hell!

XXVIII.

"Expectatur ... oratio ... in ... lingua ...
Latina ..." — Whence? came they from mortal lips, —
Those mystic words, — or some invisible singer?
'Tis *he*: behold him where he looms, like ships
Refracted in the clouds; — *that classic form*
Of Phidian marble, only, breathing, warm!

XXIX.

But, hold! — Behind him, on its ponderous hinges
Parts the wide door ; thither a thousand burning
Glances are focused : marvel not, it sings
And dazzles and dyes the young man's features, turning
Them various hues : a thousand scorching rays
From maidens' eyes would make an ice-house blaze !

XXX.

He comes ! a tall, majestic youth, advancing,
Like a triumphant march in ancient Roma,
With lion heart resolved to stem the glancing
Of beauteous eyes : even thus, in days of Homer
And the heroic ages, raised on high
Their gleaming swords, chiefs met the embattled enemy.

XXXI.

He bows ; — it thunders ! — clap on clap resounding !
The galleries ring reiterated thunder ! —
He bows ; — like legions of wild devils pounding
On Chaos' back, stamp follows stamp ! — Strange wonder,
That students, stairs, studs, seats and plastering, all,
Should not upon the assembled bonnets fall,

XXXII.

In terrible ruin ! — cracking skulls and bones
And arms, and shins and spines and necks and livers
And lungs and hearts ! — I hear the dying groans
Of men and maidens, and behold red rivers
Of human gore ! Revolting sight ! — I trust,
As it always has, 't will always end *in dust* !

XXXIII.

Ere long, the cloud subsided ; and he stood,
Like Cæsar, “ at the base of Pompey’s statue,”
Gazing upon the assembled multitude,
And raised his arm, as though about to pat you,
And spake strange words ; (and yet they seemed to please
The maidens) “ *Oh ! formosæ virgines !* ”

XXXIV.

Now high, now low, now fearful, wild and tragic
Speaks he. The pulpit now, now shakes the forum
Fearfully near the edge, as if 't were magic
Only that held him back from tumbling o'er them ! —
'T is done — Like Hamlet’s father’s spirit past
He from the stage : loud plaudits swell the blast.

XXXV.

Again that clear-toned voice above the crowd ;
Again loud thunder ; and again another,
Though less majestic and less meekly proud,
With curly locks and silken gown (his mother
Was there) appears ; — his voice loud as the breeze,
Clear as the sky ; — a young Demosthenes :

XXXVI.

He ends ; like plaudits waft him from the forum.
And yet another appears, “A Latin Version,”
And waves an unknown sceptre gently o’er them :
His gown, as when the Eunuch’s from immersion
Came forth baptized, hung meekly around his heels ; —
He spake ; he ended amidst tempestuous peals ! —

XXXVII.

These two were Juniors. — But of loftier mien,
Behold ! a Senior comes ; his eagle eye
Aimed at the clouds : his glossy locks between
His shoulders hung, like sun-set drapery ;
Him eyed the maidens, him the matrons, him
Fathers and Faculty. Strange fancies swim

XXXVIII.

Through every brain, and expectation faints

Expectant : — hark ! those lips begin their motion,
First softly tranquil, like the prayer of saints ;

Now, like the increasing flames, or waves of ocean
Before the earthquake shock, swells the loud theme,
Resplendent as an Hebrew Poet's dream.

XXXIX.

“Ah ! Eloquence, thou wast out-done !” thy wings

Did break themselves with over-flapping ; thou
Didst shake thy feathers off, and crack thy strings

With overstraining ; thou didst seek to plough
Too deep the fields of ether, and didst mount
Icarian-like too near the all-heating fount !

XL.

Yet 't was a glorious failure ; few have ever

Made such and lived . . . unnoticed. — Age will calm
The glowing fires of youth ; the spirit never

Boils over twice. Dance for the young, and psalm
And sermon for the old. — He ended, and
His last words mingled with the Brigade Band. —

XLI.

Then "music arose with its voluptuous swell ;
Soft eyes looked love to eyes which spake again."
"Anna" was there, "Jane," "Julia," "Isabel,"
"Sarah" and "fair Angelia ;" and young men
Were gazing on them, "a la mode Française ;"
And yet they frowned not on their classic gaze !

XLII.

Ah ! maidens, what would Exhibition be
Without your *fanning* influence, smiles and eyes ? —
Who would address bare walls and Faculty,
Or glory in such empty victories ?
For *you*, it is, the stream of eloquence
Rolls out ! They feel ; they speak — in self-defence !

XLIII.

But hold ! — again the dying music hushes,
Still as a sleeping infant, and — but hist ! —
Both doors unfold : here, like a mad bull, rushes
A Junior ; there his fierce antagonist.
"Arcadians both," high-blooded, skilled alike
To stammer, rave, strut, weep, swing, tremble, strike !

XLIV.

Slapity-bang! whang, like India squibs and crackers,
Word follows word! Greek roots commingle! thunder
And lightning! omnibuses! drunken Bacchus!
Silence! contempt! despair! forgiveness! wonder!
Half-reconciled! no, never! O! moi! pōs!
Kai gar! ou-po-potè! they come — to blows!

XLV.

They end. “’T was startling, but magnificent:” —
Mothers were there, and fathers; and they smiled
With inward joy, even at their own descent. —
Doctors were there, and ministers, beguiled
(Or feigned to be) by those wild, classic strains,
Estranged — and *always* strangers to their brains!

XLVI.

Maidens! beware! a Senior comes — his eye, —
Full as an orbèd shield, keen as a spear! —
Will stab you to the heart! — Sweet agony,
I ween, though fatal. — Cautious! hold! — I fear! —
He comes! — Oh, venturesome girls! — So kindly beaming,
Ye deem him innocently on you dreaming.

XLVII.

Yet dreams are dangerous ; and young people should not
Be suffered even to dream, without permission,
About each other ; then, there surely would not
Be half so many in that bad condition,
Called love. — But ah ! I see all preaching vain is ;
Your eyes and ears are where that mellow strain is,

XLVIII.

Bewitched. — Ah ! now ye fear him not ; those words
So tender, soft, low, sweet, melodious, mild ;
That graceful motion — as when tuneful birds
Sing on the waving branches — have beguiled
Your senses ; and those thoughts, chaste, bold, poetic,
Leave you entranced, letheonized, magnetic !

XLIX.

He smiled, he bowed ; and, as he passed away,
The maidens sighed ; the echoing galleries rung. —
Muses ! Oh, muses, help ! “ Oh, make essay ! ” —
Behold ! fierce champions of the Latin tongue,
Two Juniors come ; the one, like a tall giraffe
With Webster’s front ; the other nearly half

L.

His stature ; short, yet firm, and with an eye
That flashed intelligence, and raven locks.
High-blooded both ; both hot for victory :
Both, too, had “ thundered at Euphrates’ rocks,”
Like Cæsar, (had they lived then,) and had led
Legions on legions to a gory bed ;

LI.

Who knows ? ’T is wise, at least, to speculate
On things that might have been. Behold, how luck,
Not brains, has made earth’s great immortals great : —
These boys might have been Cæsars, or have stuck
Cæsar, as Brutus did, or loved “ the *galls* ”
Like “ Charley,” or eaten them up like cannibals !

LII.

Disgusting thought ! — But here they spouted Latin
In Harvard College, and the crowd delighted
Saw them, like Goodies, clothed in gowns of satin
Or silk or cotton, black as souls benighted. —
All, save the gowns, was startling, splendid, tragic,
But gowns on *men* have lost their *wonted* magic ;

LIII.

I know not why. And yet a beautiful gown is
A beautiful thing on woman with its *bustle*
And other appendages ; its silky sound is
A pleasant thing to hear, as is the rustle
Of angels' wings ; it fits her, like an halo
Around the sun guarding the eyes " a malo ! "

LIV.

They ended, like a night-mare ; — by this meaning,
They did it " with a rush " — the hot sweat courses
Adown their perspiring faces, gleaning,
Like Ruth, at every step, additional forces,
Until it reached their boots, and stopped to flow, as
This self-same Ruth slept at the foot of Boas.

LV.

They ended ; and the crowd had nearly fainted
From long and wild excitement, when sweet music
Pours forth its soul-like, cordial : smiles are painted
On features that but now were pale and grew sick.
Even the Faculty rose up to view,
Smiling to deem their task full half-way through.

LVI.

Silence again. A Senior comes, big-hearted,
Firm, honest, kind, intelligent ; his brow
Bore marks of thought and study : he had started
His course already fixed. — I hear him now,
As then, methinks, preaching before his wife
And flock, in some Wyonian vale of life.

LVII.

Long may he flourish, eloquent and great,
Devout and good, “fisher of men,” and gain
Innumerable souls, using the bait
That never fails, a cultivated brain,
Zeal, faith, and love ; even till his days are ended,
And life’s high dreams in heavenly joys are blended.

LVIII.

He left the crowd delighted : and another, —
Fair-featured as the moon, a gentle speaker,
(His mother’s son, and more, his sister’s brother,) —
Now holds the stand, speaking “in linguâ Græcâ ”
Wild warbling sounds. All list enchanted, altho’
None understood him, more than great Ralph Waldo.

LIX.

“My kingdom for a horse !” Behold ! he cometh
Striding majestic ; he a Senior ; he, too,
“The potent orator ;” the gallery hummeth
Loud thunders of applause ; and, like a bee to
A flower, the maidens’ eyes are turned on him,
That lordly Senior of the lofty limb.

LX.

Strong was his manly voice, deep, loud, sonorous,
As is the wave-lashed caves of sounding ocean ;
Far swept his gestures, and, like shadows o’er us,
Waved his long arms in terrible commotion !
Full were his periods rolling, like waters
Swollen by the moon ; his thoughts, whales, sharks, and
otters !

LXI.

He ended, with a bow majestic, and
Bewildered sat the breathless multitude.
Many have fainted — had the Brigade Band
Not fingered forth its last, long interlude ! —
Silence ! A Junior comes ; short, thick ; — his voice
Rolls, like the current of the Illinois,

LXII.

And charms the crowd. — Scarce had he left the forum,
When, like some building moved along the street,
A stout, broad-breasted Senior sails before them
To unload his cargo, — roots and logs of Greek !
One deemed he was Demosthenes, — another, —
From that long gown, — Demosthenes's mother !

LXIII.

The last, save one, succeeding, with a bound up
Leaps into view, and trembleth over the rostrum,
Like Richard, when his fearful dream had wound up ;
Writhing, as though some inward, griping nostrum
Gnawed every nerve. — 'T was but the serpent's coil
Before the spring. Words, thoughts, emotions boil

LXIV.

Within him, and in vain seek outlet through
His lips at once. — Too furious youth ; he never
Could check the tide of eloquence, that threw
And tossed him about — in vain ; — it could not sever
Him from the theme. He storms. Though clothed in
thunders,
His lightnings always hit ; his audience wonders !

LXV.

Music again, before the great "finale,"
Wafts from the stage the raving Cicero.
And, like some bed of roses in a vale, the
Aurorian maidens, in the seats below,
Lift up their heads and shake their flowery bonnets,
Seeming, methought, most like embodied sonnets! —

LXVI.

But earth itself must pass away, and even
The constellations burn, like Egyptian mummies!
And vanish, making room for Hell and Heaven! —
This of the universe the end and sum is;
Then marvel not that this great exhibition
Should end, bright, glowing, as the furnace of perdition!

LXVII.

Oh! what a sight, to gaze from Heaven's high towers
Upon the flaming universe! — the Dragon
Writhing in agony, shaking red showers
Of meteors from his tail! — Like a rumbling wagon
Over pavements, rattling down the milkyway,
Night shall pursue the blazing wheels of Day!

.

LXVIII.

Direful the groans of constellations dying : —

Taurus loud-bellowing, and hot Leo roaring ;
Aries and Capricornus, and the frying
Pisces and boiling Cancer ; Virgo deploring ;
Castor and Pollux, furious as in battle,
Shall gird the Zodiac with death's horrible rattle !

LXIX.

Northward, the Bears shall snarl in agony, and
The writhing Serpent, coiling fiercely around
Them, hiss ! Even Hercules, at last unmanned,
Shall hurl his terrible club, and with a bound
Shall shake the heavens : while singeing in the fire
Aquila and Cygnus moan, with the snapping Lyre !

LXX.

Circling the antarctic pole, a mingled wail —
Louder than all the accumulated thunders
Since time began — shall rise. The spouting Whale
Shall shake his bubbling body, till it sunders ;
Orion shout ; the twain Dogs yelp ; the Crow
And Hydra curse, this last funereal glow !

LXXI.

Devils shall triumph, for the Universe
Shall be a perfect Hell. All, that is matter,
Must ride to nothing in this fiery hearse !
Even the graves shall vanish, and the clatter
Of bones : the stars and all their planets, turned
To gases, 'wait their moment to be burned !

LXXII.

Spirits alone shall stand the fire. The Just,
Rising above the realms of peopled space,
Unharm'd shall see the end of sinful dust :
The Wicked sink to their own dwelling-place,
Weighed down by sins.—The gas explodes!—'Tis light!—
'Tis dark!—Heaven dawns!—Hell blackens into night!—

LXXIII.

These last six stanzas, I suppose, may seem
Rather out of place, and should be marked with "C";
That is, "want of connection" in "the theme."—
But "what is writ is writ;" so let it be :
'Tis all well here ; — though 't were a grand mistake,
To write so, should one "fish" for "*a forty-eight!*"

LXXIV.

I “fish” “for men” and women, and great ideas,
And care not how you “*mark* the paragraph.”
(*Great critics usually have long ears ;*)
I only care to make the people *laugh ;*
They make them *wail ; I* “go for *effect ;*” *they* rules,
Enemies to *genius*, but the shield of *fools*.

LXXV.

Besides, this may not, after all, be taken
Mal a propos : 't is never out of place to
Reflect upon the end : 't may “save one's bacon,”
His honor and his soul from deep disgrace too : —
And in *such* moments of high exaltation
Man may forget his God, himself, his station.

LXXVI.

Digressions, too, are only episodes,
The watering places of an epic, or a
Romance ; where, wearied by the dusty roads
Of thought, the traveller stops, and rests him for a
Brief space : hence Homer, Virgil and “Paul Flemming,”
Even in *his family* “Romance,” bring them in.

LXXVII.

Moreover, it has a wonderful effect,
In raising small things, simply to compare them
To something greater ; few will ever detect
The fallacy. — I only meant to scare them ! —
My readers — into silence, to attend
To this great Exhibition's greater end !

LXXVIII.

Silence prevails, unbroken save by the panting
Of hearts expectant ; even the fans have stopped
Their ceaseless flutter, and, “like birds,” sit slanting
On delicate hands. — ’T is said, one maiden dropped
Hers *unaware, expecting*, to be sure,
Some young beau’d pick it up and give it to her !

LXXIX.

I hope he did ; because it is no pleasing
Affair for mankind to be disappointed ;
And, least of all, young ladies, — fond of teasing,
Though not of being teased, save by unwonted
And unexpected crowds of beaux and suitors ;
Such as, young doctors, lawyers, students, tutors !

.

LXXX.

The door swings open — and — he comes! behold him

Wrapt in his mantling gown, that round him flows
Waving, as Cæsar's toga did enfold him,

What time he fell pierced through with brutal blows. —
Thunders of clapping! — As he bows, on high
“Præses” his “Oxford” doffs, and bows reply.

LXXXI.

Again it thunders, — and again! — At last

He speaks; clear, as the Aganippean fountain;
Graceful, as fairies swimming on some blast

Of ether, yet bold, majestic, as a mountain. —
He ceased. “The last” was “first.” Such was the
“snapper.” —

Alpha, Omega, and “Phi-Beta-Kappa!”

LXXXII.

Thus ended it, — an Harvard Exhibition,

When I was young. I know it may be wrong
T' have dwelt thus much upon its exposition:

But yet, an old man loves to prattle long
About his youth. — Perchance, ere long delighted,
Others may read these lines of him, they slighted,

LXXXIII.

Justly 't may be. — He always loved to please them,
And still remembers them with kind emotions ;
And if, as age creeps on, his pains may ease them
Of a single sigh, by calling up the notions,
That once were theirs ; he has not piped in vain
This song, nor yet one mournful, parting strain :

“ Nunc dicendum est finale,
Verbum mordax et lethale ;
Cuique quisque, vale ! vale ! ” — W. B. C.

1.

“ Sad the thoughts that now remind us,
College scenes have passed away,
And, like dreams of morn behind us,
Vanished into opening day !

2.

“ Farewell, youthful, boyish pleasures !
Must we bid you all adieu ?
Shall the past, with all its treasures,
Sink forever from our view ?

3.

“ College scenes, and college fancies, —
Thieves of moments idly wasted, —
Memory of you still enhances,
Still we deem you half untasted !

4.

“ But farewell ! ye must not follow
Through the coming dubious strife ;
Manhood’s ocean sure must swallow
All the brooks of college life.

5.

“ While the past and future, bending
O’er the present saddening hour,
On our souls their shades are sending,
Words have lost their wonted power.

6.

“ Heart to heart alone may whisper
What the heart alone may feel ;
Soul to soul alone may lisper
Thoughts, that through the spirit steal.

7.

“ But the sacred band that binds us,
Brothers of the mystic lot,
Still shall find, as now it finds us,
Fastened by a golden knot.

8.

“ What though now your jovial faces
Soon shall cheer my heart no more ;
Still shall memory in their places
See the noble souls of yore.

9.

“ When some fair one, o’er you bending,
Fires your souls to deeds sublime ;
When upon your knees ascending
Sons and daughters prattling climb ;

10.

“ When upon life’s great arena
Each shall act a generous part,
Bearing with a chief’s demeanor
Soul and body, mind and heart ;

11.

“ Or till wearied even with glory ;
 (May no other grief attend you,)
Till your locks are thin and hoary ;
 Till an easy death shall end you ;

12.

“ May your souls be flowing ever
 . With the sweets of joyous life,
Tasting of the bitter never, —
 And *when married have a wife !* ”



LXXXIV.

After precisely such an Exhibition,
 As this, (though many a year had vanished fast,)
Returning from his nightly expedition, —
 Somewhere, — one of the young “ Divinities ” passed
Straight through the College yard. ’T was just eleven
O’clock at night. The Student’s thoughts on Heaven

LXXXV.

Were turned, or should have been. 'T was silent round ;
Not even, "with its voluptuous swell" of dust,
Rattled one omnibus : in sleep profound
With their *rich wives* the Faculty were hushed :
Even the Students, who "*had parts*," were still ;
Some willingly ; some contrary to their will !

LXXXVI.

Even, too, the jovial "Puds," — whose luscious bowl
Of the ambrosial milk and golden maize,
Keeps full "the genial current of the soul," —
With breasts expanded, took their silent ways
To bed ; but still in dreams they feasted, or
Sang low the "Psalm of Life," or high "Excelsior" !

LXXXVII.

Onward the Student passed ; his lofty head
Behind his shoulders thrown ; his raven locks, —
Like some old Prophet, or some Indian maid, —
Flowed down behind. — "The World's a paradox !" —
He said, "a perfect sham !" and cast his eyes
Heavenward ; he hears the pump — an infant cries !

LXXXVIII.

He started back with an instinctive shudder! —

Unmarried, as he was, he felt affrighted
And reeled, like a young lambkin at the udder ;

Whereas, a husband would have stood, delighted,
Gazing. 'T is always so ; as folks grow older,
Or enter the married state, they then grow bolder.

LXXXIX.

Again the baby cries, all plaintively ! —

He starts again ; — he stops ; — he stands to list ; —
Another cry ! — and he resolves to see

The child, and be a bold philanthropist :
Bravely he seeks . . . the pump, and bending low
Beholds the weeping babe, and greets it nearly so :

1.

“ Christ, the Lord, was ‘ in a manger ’

Born and cradled ; but thou art
Here like Moses, little stranger,
In a basket, or ‘ an ark ! ’

2.

“ Who has placed thee here, my baby ?
Who has placed thee here alone ?
Where’s thy mother ? — Ah ! it may be,
She is uttering many a groan !

3.

“ Thou hast met a cold reception,
Dark and misty is thy morn ;
But the world is all deception,
And no matter where we’re born !

4.

“ ‘ O thou child of many prayers ! ’
Cast upon a barbarous shore !
For the world is full of bears,
And existence is a boar !

5.

“ Child of Harvard ! Child of Science !
Life is all an empty hoax ! —
Rise, and bid the world defiance ! —
Acorns spring to lofty oaks.

6.

“Many a child, without a father
Or a mother, like to thee,
Living mounts a throne, or rather
Richly there deserves to be!

7.

“Boldly meet the world, my dearest;
Fortune may attend thee yet:
Thou may'st, if thou rightly steerest,
Be a Second Everett!

8.

“If the proud and haughty ever
Twit thee for thy lowly birth;
Tell them, that thy soul forever
Shall exist; — thy body's earth!

9.

“Tell them, that thou art descended
From an old and lofty line: —
Thou art all, they e'er pretended;
Eve's and Adam's blood is thine!”

XC.

The Student ended, and, as if in prayer :

He raised his hands to heaven, and then he pumped
A little water, and baptized him there :

The water wet his baby head : he jumped
At first ; but when the Student in his arm
Held him and sang this short baptismal psalm :



1.

“ I baptize thee, child of knowledge ! —
Here may'st thou thy kindred claim ;
Thou wast found near Harvard College,
And ‘ Childe Harvard ’ be thy name !

2.

“ Harvard be thy guardian *pater* ;
And, because thou hast no other,
Harvard be thy ‘ Alma Mater ; ’
Be thy father and thy mother ! ”

XCI.

The baby smiled, as though his infant eyes
Beheld the future crowned with fame and roses ! —
He saw his patron, and with glad surprise
Bethought him of the little bulrushed Moses ;
May be, he saw, some bounteous millionaire, —
Some whole-souled Lawrence, — would instruct and send
him there !

XCII.

O, generous act ! — The wealth, — that hews but one
Tall granite slab, — were it bestowed on thee,
Might raise a spirit up, a glorious son
Of Science, from the depths of misery ! —
The proudest done of art will moulder away :
One deed, like that, will live throughout Eternity !

XCIII.

I said, the student was unmarried ; had he
Have had a wife and home, he would have known
What way to turn ; the child had called him, “ daddy ! ”
Ere this, and been adopted as his own.
It always saves a deal of pains and cost,
To get a child, somebody else has lost !

XCIV.

It would have been, as every one must see,
A most outrageous act to carry it
Crying, that night to "The Divinity;"
Perchance, the Faculty might have "seen fit"
To send him off — "unkindest cut of all" —
For having "*strange folks*" in that sacred Hall!

XCV.

He stood beside the pump, and paused, as if
Buried "in thoughts too deep;" and then he drew
A sigh, and then his pocket-handkerchief; —
When, suddenly he gazed, and hurrying through
The gate, he saw a female form; — her hair
Dishevelled, floated on the star-lit air.

XCVI.

He saw; and in his coat-tail pocket jammed
The babe; and, swifter than the wild-wood deer,
Pursued that female form. — But I have "*crammed*"
This canto quite too full, and somewhat fear,
'T will burst! for if the Student overtook
The maiden, what he saw would make another book!!




CHILDE HARVARD.

CANTO II.

“And your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions.”—JOEL ii. 23.

“El Mundo es un Sueño.”—SPANISH PROVERB.

CHILDE HARVARD.



CANTO II.

“And your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions.” — JOEL ii. 23.

“El Mundo es un Sueño.” — SPANISH PROVERB.

I.

By this time, I conclude, ye all are willing,
And perfectly prepared, to hear the dream,
I promised you, some stanzas past ; — a thrilling
And beautiful vision ! Ladies, don't now scream
And act like fools ; because 't will make me gruffer
Than time, — or else I hope to never suffer !

II.

Or, if you 're going to scream, you'd better do it

At first, so as not to interrupt the story,
Just at the moment I am half way through it,

And my young muse is soaring in her glory
'Twixt heaven and earth, bound to those fabulous streams
In fairy land, the "Apian Land" of dreams;

III.

Where baby dreams are born and nursed, and nightmares
And horses run loose, like our wild "mustangs"

In the far west; and images of white-bears,

Giraffes, boars, kangaroos, orang-outangs,
Constrictors, skunks, hyenas, screech-owls, hedgehogs,—
Whatever dwells in air, earth, sea or sedge-bogs, —

IV.

Are there daguerreotyped; even we ourselves

Have shadowy counterparts, waiting the bidding
Of their own fancies to descend, like elves,

To some dull slumberer's brain, and therein hidden
Make him think, 't is ourselves he is dreaming of: —
This often happens when young people love.

V.

When lovers love below, their dreams are loving
Above; and when they woo, their dreams are wooing;
And when they walk in groves, their dreams are *groveing*;
And when, like doves, they coo, their dreams are cooing:
But when they sleep, the dreams divide, 't is said,
And each one seeks the other lover's bed!

VI.

'T is strange how I should dream that dream; although
There was a cause: when one has seen a foundery, —
Of Meshech, Shadrach and Abednego,
He is sure to dream; or when he has heard a roundelay
From some fair maiden's lips, or been to a wedding,
He'll dream of David's harp, and beds and bedding!

VII.

'T was even thus with me: that Exhibition
With all its fair enchantments — lads and lasses —
Music and spouters — put me in a condition
Most similar to that, in which an ass is,
Weighed down by pumpkins or a load of girls
In creels, or crushed to earth by sacks of pearls.

VIII.

Bewildered I left, exhausted and amazed :

For those young orators did pierce and shiver
The universe, through whose broad cracks in blazed

The future and the past ! — How like a river
Of thoughts, they swept the breathless crowd before them,
And ever and anon dashed fiercely o'er them !

IX.

I left bewildered, and that night repaired

Early to bed ; (I can't say where my chum went, —
With whom,—what time he got home,—how he fared ; —

No body knows ; no body could circùmvent
That curious chap ; — I always have suspected
He went to see . . . Ann . . Oyster . . . soup dissected !

X.

But I, of course, was not “my brother's keeper ;”

Nor would I, proctor-like, tell tales about him. —
That night I slept a dreamy slumber, deeper

Than was my wont : I slept alone, without him.)
'T was midnight now ; 'twixt which and morn, the vision
Flow'd thro' my soul, like streams thro' fields Elysian.

XI.

I dreamed, I saw a female angel coming
Straight down from glory, attended by a train
Of cherubs, with their little harp-strings humming
Celestial notes and many a soft refrain. —
Nearer she came, downward, still downward wending,
Till finally she stopped, above me bending.

XII.

Imagine how I felt ! — I did not know her,
Nor could I, in the name of all that's frightful,
Conjecture how she got in ; for the door
Was locked. But there she stood, a thing delightful,
Bewilderingly fair. — I tried to scream,
Because I knew not that she *was* a dream !

XIII.

(You know what is the nature of a vision ;
Imaginations always seem to be
Realities : such was the case with this one.)
And then I blushed, and feared “ The Faculty ”
Would find it out ; ” and finally “ expel ”
My body — and my soul . . . would go to — hell !

XIV.

“ *Expulsion* ” is a dread phenomenon :

It *always ruins* a youth, and nearly *kills*
His parents. — ’T were a better way, when one
Does wrong, to make him take a dose of pills ;
Or fasten him up in “ Commons ” or in attics,
And make him study “ P——’s Mathematics.”

XV.

And were I President of Harvard College,
(Pardon ! — “ The University at Cambridge,”
Is what I meant to say,) — that place where knowledge
Depends on “ *marks* ; ” and who has most, on fame’s ridge-
Pole stands preëminent, even as a steeple
And weathercock tower up above the people !

XVI.

Harvard ! Oh, Harvard ! venerated shade ! —
Illustrious, primal founder ! glorious Harvard !
Thy name, — behold ! posterity had laid
It down to slumber in oblivion’s grave-yard ! —
Thy pounds, thy prayers, thy hopes were all in vain,
Eclipsed by Phillips, Lawrence, Gore and Dane !

XVII.

Young martyred Phillips acted rather silly
In leaving the world so soon, before his glory,
Which by his "last and truly munificent will" he
Acquired, had come to be a common story
In all the papers. — All the other donors
Saw fit to live, and living buy up mourners.

XVIII.

But he, the much afflicted youth, retiring
And modest, cared not even to hear his name
Once trumpeted ; but made his will expiring ;
And modestly to escape the voice of Fame, —
Virgil describes her — bid the world defiance,
And went self-martyred to the cause of Science !

XIX.

Were I a man of millions, I would be
One of two things ; or genèrous, *while I live*,
And bless poor suffering humanity,
And learn to know how good it is to give ;
Or die and make my wealth all into a coffin
Of gold and gems and pearls, to bear me off in ! —

XX.

As I was saying ; — were I President

“At Cambridge,” I would make some “radical changes”
In various points. ’T would be my first intent

To keep “the Students” confined in proper ranges
Of time and place. Around the college yard
I would have a monstrous wall, and gates and guard ;

XXI.

At every gate a frightful Proctor in all his

Equipments stationed ; and should any Student
Or Goody attempt to spit, or smoke, or call his

Friend from the window ; — or any other imprudent
And sinful act ; or stand *in crowds* “of three” —
All is, — “report them to the Faculty !”

XXII.

And should they “scrape” in prayers, because they are long

And rather “squirty” at times ; or fire some cocks
Of hay, or rockets, or tar, or sing a song

Or psalm by night ; just clap them in the stocks !
But vain is all reform, this wall and gate
Unbuilt, unguarded firm by half past eight. —

XXIII.

“ Man is a curious phenomenon ; ”

He has no more control over his notions
Than any thing else ; the fact is, thoughts are born
Revolving swifter than perpetual motions :
Ideas are like a cactus, ever springing
Out of themselves, in all directions clinging.

XXIV.

There stood she still, — that angel vision, — bending
Over my sleeping form, and I was gazing
With spirit eyes on her : — two spirits blending
In one long, silent look. Suddenly raising
A vial of the ethereal “ *chloroform*, ”
She laid it on my lips with fingers warm.

XXV.

Oh ! then, how most unutterably curious
Were the sensations that came softly stealing
Over my body ! Never so luxurious
And so bewilderingly funny a feeling
Had I experienced in all my days :
All smiles I felt, all bliss, all songs of praise !

XXVI.

My soul seemed loosened from its coils, and floated
Before my face ; methought I saw my eyes ;
But they were closed : the world whirled round all bloated
With rainbows and celestial harmonies :
The heavens appeared about “ the central sun,”
Rotating, on that golden pivot hung.

XXVII.

A palsyng tremor thrills my body, and
It feels no more. I was a naked spirit
And with that spiritual creature, hand in hand,
Borne toward another world, now drawing near it
Swifter than thought : I dare not open wide
My swimming eyes upon the billowy tide

XXVIII.

Of ether ; half-entranced and half affrighted,
I clasped my arms around the fairy being
That buoyed me up ; she clasped in turn delighted
My trembling form ; well pleased, it seemed, at seeing
My natural fears, but more, that she should be
My faithful pilot over that azure sea.

XXIX.

“Fear not,” she said, and strained me closer to her
Warm bosom ; “fear not, child of earth, for thou
Wast born to be the first, the only viewer
Of man’s primordial state, and whence and how
Spirits originate, and infant souls
Descend to earth, and enter fleshly moulds.”

XXX.

She ended, pointing downward, and again —
Just as our naked feet touched on, I know not
What delicate substance — spake ; “This is the main,
Long bridge, that lies between the isles, where grow not
Corporeal beings, and earth, which shines afar,
Yonder, thou seest, beside the Evening star.”

XXXI.

She ceased ; and lo ! I gazed ; and we were treading
Upon a bridge of rainbows lightly floating
Over the ethereal waves. A gulf lay spreading
Below it. Far as eye could reach, were boating
And sails and skiffs, and they that rode therein,
It seemed, were happy spirits, light and thin.

XXXII.

“ Oh ! who and what are they ? — What world is this ? ”

I said : “ Is this a land of phantasy
And mere delusions, or the home of bliss ? —

What shores are those ? — what islands, and what sea ?
For I am lost.” She smiled, and clasped my hand
In hers, and said, “ This is the *Apian Land* ! ”

XXXIII.

“ The ‘ *Apian Land* ! ’ — the land of bees and apes,

Is it ? ” I said : “ it cannot be the old
Peloponnesus ; for such airy shapes

As these, no Grecian bard has ever told
Us of. — Is that a steamboat there ? — My notion
Is, that it moves by a perpetual motion !

XXXIV.

“ For I behold the sparkling paddles plying,

But see no smoke, no steam, and hear no puffing
Nor wheezing ; and she rides, like condors flying

Majestic o’er the Andes, skimming, luffing,
Floating upon the billowy air. — Oh ! who
Are they upon her deck ? — where voyaging to ? ”

XXXV.

“ We soon shall see ;” replied my angel guide ;
“ But first ascend we to the bridge’s tip,
And thence behold the sight.” We onward glide,
As easily as silvery fishes slip
Between the particles of water, and
Swifter than the winds, high on the summit stand.

XXXVI.

Above us, more resplendent than the morning, —
When at Creation’s birth the stars were singing, —
All rainbow-tinted a gorgeous, golden awning,
Supported high on ivory posts, was swinging.
The floor was jasper, smoother than the cheek
Of a Circassian girl, or beardless Greek.

XXXVII.

Around it all an open balustrade
Of crystal ran. Carved in fantastic fashion
Couches were there, softer than those where laid
That eastern queen, known for her wondrous passion
For Solomon. Soft breezes blew, and, as a
Cradle, so rocked this rainbow bridge’s great piazza.

XXXVIII.

Awhile I gazed ; and then grew dizzy, reeling
From very giddiness, and should have tipt
Over the balustrade, had not a feeling
Of pity seized my guide, who softly slipt, —
In time to save, — her arm around my waist,
And kindly drew me back and gently placed

XXXIX.

Me on a velvet couch. I thanked her kindly,
And soon revived. — “ Behold ! ” she said, and pointed
To where the vessel moved ; but all went blindly
And mistily ; my vision still disjointed
Beheld the deck, but they, that rode thereon,
Appeared no bigger than a distant swan.

XL.

I saw them walking to and fro and tossing
Something, I knew not what, high in the air
And in their arms : crossing and then recrossing
They walked the deck. — I asked my guardian fair,
“ O, who and what are they ? ” — Without reply,
She smiled, and from her head pulled out an eye !

XLI.

“Take this!” she said. — I started with affright
And wild astonishment. — “Take this; — I hope
You’re not afraid of a girl’s eye! — your sight
Is short: mine beats the Cambridge telescope!”
I blushed and took the eye, but said, “I fear,
You rob yourself.” — “I have another here,

XLII.

The mate to that;” she said, “be not alarmed;
One eye, like this, is quite enough for any
Woman. To take one out has never harmed
It yet, and I have pulled it out full many
A time! The eye is but a kind of spy-glass
Through which the spirit looks — a sort of eye-glass.”

XLIII.

“’Tis true:” I smiled; “but such an eye, as this is,
Is something more methinks than convex glasses,
Coatings and humors. The eye of soul-like misses,
Like thee, if only a machine, surpasses
All other machines; but I could swear there is a
Spirit within, that turns a fellow dizzy!”

XLIV.

“ That is a question of mere *ideality* ; ”
Replied the female angel ; “ but alas !
One thing, I fear, will be a real reality ;
Unless you look, the vessel soon will pass
From sight, around that promontory, where
Mingle the island, ocean and the air. —

XLV.

“ Where is the eye ? — You have put it in your pocket
I guess ! ” — “ No ! here it is, — now only show us
The way to use an eye pulled out of socket,
And if I do’nt devour the scene below us ! ” —
She smiled, and thought it rather strange that I
Had never learned the way to use an eye !

XLVI.

“ Why, — hold it up precisely as you hold an
Opera glass, when Fanny Elsler dances !
What now ! you ar’nt afraid ? — You are a bold man ! ”
“ Of course I am not afraid ; but yet the chances
Are very many that one will lose his eyes
By such an *idle*, daring enterprise ;

XLVII.

“ But let me ‘ pass the Rubicon,’ ” I said,
And grasped the eye and held it close to mine.
The eye appeared to smile and wink, and shed
A sort of mellow, sun-set light, so fine
And so bewildering, that I could see
Only the eye, and that was fixed on me !

XLVIII.

“ Just turn it round, holding the *retina*,
And not the *cornea* to your own, and look
Upon the ship, and things will clearer far
Appear than golden letters in a book : ”
She said ; and I obeyed ; and, gazing through
Her eye, brought up the spirit ship to view.

XLIX.

And lo ! and what a sight was there to see !
The vessel’s self was made of crystal, and
Bedecked with various gems, whose brilliancy
Outshone the stars. The gentle breezes fanned
Her on, assisted by the perpetual motion
Within her hull ; — her name — THE UNSEEN OCEAN.

L.

An angel sat upon the helm, holding
A telescope, and placed high up among
The rigging were happy sailors : these were folding
Their arms, in thought ; and those, while musing, sung.
When suddenly, just as the vessel drew
Well nigh the shore, the helmsman hailed the crew :

LI.

“ All hands ahoy ! furl every sail, and bring
The babies forth upon the deck ; ” he said,
And instantly from all the cabin spring
Innumerable forms, and all arrayed,
Like angels, in thin garbs of “ woven air,”
And all were young, and most exceeding fair.

LII.

And they appeared to be virgins, except
That they had wings, and on their bosoms carried
Young infants’ souls, that there reposing slept. —
“ O, who are they ? ” I cried, “ and are they married ?
Or are they nursery-maids, or are they mothers ?
And are those infants all sisters and brothers

LIII.

“ Of one great family ? They all are fair,
And clothed alike. Oh, tell me whence — and whither
This marvellous crew ? ” My guardian spoke ; “ Even there
Thou, too, before thy birth, wast borne together
With thy contemporaries, most of whom
Are living still ; others are in the tomb !

LIV.

“ And those, whom thou mistakest for mothers, are
But guardian spirits, whose whole souls’ delight
It is to guide young spirits down, and war
Off evil shades, until they safely alight
Upon the shores of earth, to spend . . . a day,
Or a few years at most, in forms of clay.

LV.

“ The world is but a pasture for probation
For souls incarnate. Fleshly bodies never
Beget a soul. Some pasture for damnation ;
Others more wisely choose to “ live forever
In bliss.” “ But souls,” I said, “ I deemed to be
Nothing, that one might weigh, or touch, or see.”

LVI.

“ Young man,” replied the Vision, “ thou hast fed
On false philosophy : the soul of man is
Substance : ‘ there is a natural *body*,’ said
The Sacred Writer, ‘ and (such God’s great plan is)
A spiritual *body* ; ’ one enfolds
The other, as a sponge the shapeless water holds.

LVII.

“ Compress and squeeze the sponge ; the liquid then
Flows out : ’t is even so with flesh and soul ;
You squeeze a person hard enough, — as when
A black bear, or a white bear round the pole,
Just hugs his enemies as we do friends, —
The spirit oozes out ; existence ends !

LVIII.

“ The soul is something, is it not ? And that,
Which is not nothing, must have *weight*, although
We cannot weigh it, as we do hog’s-fat,
In our imperfect balances below : —
We cannot weigh the lightning, but we feel
Its weight and power ; it makes the mountains reel !

LIX.

“ Were spirits but a *mere abstraction*, how
 Could they incite and move and rule our bodies ?
Could an abstraction of an ox-team, plough ;
 Or men “ get high ” by drinking abstract toddies ?
Or could imaginary lightnings tip
A steeple over, or destroy a ship ? ”

LX.

She ended out of breath ; and I began
 To feel somewhat bewildered, and replied ;
“ I rather guess that you are right ; the plan
 Of the universe none knows, who has not died ;
And even then, perhaps, his own affairs
Engross the larger portion of his cares.

LXI.

“ If these be baby souls, as thou hast told me ; —
 All is — I have a curiosity
To know from whence they came, and therefore boldly
 With modest deference demand of thee,
If they be born, as fleshly babes below ;
If they be made ; or if, like acorns, grow

LXII.

“On trees ; — how sweet must be the blossoming
Of such a plant ! — how delicate the flowers
Of fruits that ripen to so fair a thing,

Like which no rose e'er bloomed in Eden's bowers ! —
Or are they hatched from spirit eggs, which some
Celestial bird deposits in her azure home ? ”

LXIII.

“Presumptuous youth ! ” replied the Vision, “thou
Wouldst know all things. I cannot tell thee whether
These babies are born, or hatched, or made, or how ! —

But when “THE UNSEEN OCEAN” makes another
Voyage for souls, I, too, intend to go
To that far land, and then I'll let thee know.

LXIV.

“But hold ! — they are singing now, high on the shore ;—

It is the missionary hymn of souls
Prepared for their long journey, just before

They leave for Earth. How sweet the music rolls !
Oh, list ! — The babes awake ; with wild surprise
They move their arms, and earthward bend their eyes.

HYMN OF THE GUARDIAN SPIRITS.

1.

“ Little Spirits ! life is dawning,
Where the mundane coasts appear :
Little Spirits ! lo ! the morning
Of existence reddening near !

2.

“ On the hill-tops, on the mountains
Smiling creeps the golden day : —
We have brought you from the fountains
And the gardens far away :

3.

“ We have brought you over the billows
Of the boundless, heavenly sea :
On our bosoms for your pillows
Have we held you lovingly.

4.

“ Ye are holy, ye are fearless
Coming pure from God’s own hands ;
Ye are happy, ye are tearless
As the blissful, cherub bands :

5.

“ But existence lies before you
On Probation’s dusty plain ;
Good and evil bending o’er you,
Trials, temptings, joys and pain.

6.

“ Seek the good and shun the wicked ;
’T is the only rule of life ; —
God will guide you over the picked,
’Thorny fields of human strife.

7.

“ Life is short and time is fleeting ;
Good or evil, ere a day,
Backward will your wings be beating,
Backward to eternity !

8.

“ Go, improve the golden season,
Go, improve it while ye may : —
Sowing seeds of truth and reason,
Ye shall reap eternal day !

9.

“ Little Spirits ! life is dawning,
Where the mundane coasts appear :
Little Spirits ! lo ! the morning
Of existence reddening near ! ”

CHILDE HARVARD.

CANTO III.

“The custom of conveying instruction by dreams or visions.” —
CHANNING.

“Bask' ithi, oule Oneire ! . . . Be d'ar Oneiros.” — HOMER.

“Mein Sohn, es ist ein Nebelstreif.” — GÖTHE.

,

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I.

THE hymn hath ceased ; and all at once, — as when

A new-fledged brood of “bobolinkums,” starting
From their high nest, before the approach of men,

Try their unpractised wings, — those infants, parting
In all directions, seek the earth below. —

“Observe them,” cried the Vision, “where they go :

II.

“ ’T is curious to mark their wandering,
Their chance-directed courses and their fates :
This finds the body of an infant king
Or queen of . . . England . . . or The United States ;
That, seeks the Hottentots ; while others, go, —
Poor things ! — To Ireland and the Esquimaux !

III.

“ There, two, as if by crazed predestination, —
Alike in beauty, size and color — hand in
Hand downward go to some far-off Plantation ;
The one to be a slave, the other standing
Above him with the lash. While yet another
Enters a body with no father and no mother !

IV.

“ Had they but reason and experience, —
Which always come too late, — they ’d make a better
Selection of their future residence,
No doubt ; but marriages and births, they fetter
A man just where he is ! ’T is vain to flutter :
He had better eat, content, his ‘ bread and butter ; ’

V.

“ And let the world roll round, till he rolls off it
Into eternity! All things, at last,
Will ‘turn up’ right; there is but little profit
In grumbling over th’ unalterable past!
What tho’ ’t is rather hard to see a fool
Crowd out the man of brains? — All is, *keep cool!* ”

VI.

She said, and smiled, and all at once departed,
“ Taking French leave,” and left me there suspended
Between two worlds. I am not craven-hearted,
But then I felt as though my days were ended
All but. The rainbow swerves, and the piazza
Trembles, and I . . . quake worse than old Belshazzar!

VII.

I never knew before how bad a feeling
It is to “get the slip:” I had heard them say
That it was terrible; but this revealing
Of my condition, took me quite away
From all composure, and I felt inclined
To let her have a portion of my mind:

VIII.

Then I bethought me of the pledge which she
Had left behind ; I mean that magic eye
Of hers, — or what had so been feigned to be.

“ Return, fair one ! ” I shouted lustily,
“ Return and take your eye ! ” — A voice far under
The rainbow bridge, replied, “ Please, go to thunder !

IX.

That eye was all a hoax ; she made you think it
Was hers, most verdant youth ! If you ’re inclined
To do so, you may stay up there and *wink it*,
Forever and forever, till you find
Out your mistake ! — All are not angels, who
Look finely and say pretty things to you ! ” —

X.

My head began to whirl ; I fell, confounded,
Back on the couch ! — When next the power of seeing
Returned, I saw her, and her waist surrounded
By a tall student’s arm ! “ Oh ! treacherous being ! ”
I cried, “ Once rescued from this perilous plight,
I trust no more those phantoms of the night ! ”

XI.

But then it was a sort of satisfaction —

Although I pitied her — to know that she
Would get her pay. There always is a reaction

On those who perpetrate such villany. —
(Kind reader, you must keep in mind, that this all
Is but a dream, and not a real *miss-fall*.)

XII.

Well, now such was my elevated condition,

That I had nothing else to do, but just
Sit there, and see her *flirt* her own perdition !

("Whatever is, is right : " even the worst ! ?) —
That Student was a fine young man, his mother
And father's only son : (they had no other !)

XIII.

They loved their son, of course, and wished to make him
An ornament to his country and a blessing

To them. — They little thought what snares would take him

On every hand ; and yet they gave a lesson
To him, before he went, " full of wise saws," —
They gave a Bible and " The College Laws,"

XIV.

And left the rest to Providence. But ah !

It seems as though some people were predestined
To act like fools, especially when far

From home and all restraint ; and thus the best end
Of life is worse than wasted ; and per force
Of circumstance waste all their college course.

XV.

I said, his parents loved him, both his mother

And father with all parental tenderness.

They loved too much ; they taught him to love other

People, — by too much fondling — scarcely less
Than they loved him : this always was the case,
When he beheld a fair, young female face :

XVI.

And such was Nancy's. (Nancy was the name,

I think one canto was begun with, but
She was no dream.) I tell you how I came

To find it out. I dreamed, the Student "got
Sent off from College," for some secret crime ;
And when far off, he penned this tuneful rhyme :

TO NANCY.

“O! (Nancy) *luce carior.*” — VIRGIL.

“Come, gentle muse, inspire my song,
And push my clumsy words along,
While I reclining 'neath the shade,
At leisure sing my Cambridge maid.

CHORUS.

“Were you with me, my Nancy O,
To ‘rusticate’ and fancy, O!
How swift the day would wear away
With you, my Cambridge Nancy O!

“My Nancy’s eyes of laughing blue
Were clearer than the sky in hue,
And glistened like a shining star;
Like Venus or the god of war.

Were you with me, &c.

“ Her cheeks were as the blushing rose
That in my Nancy’s garden blows ;
Her lips were as the myrtle sweet —
How oft with mine they used to meet !
Were you with me, &c.

“ The ringlets of her golden hair,
That flowed around her neck so fair,
Were brighter than the golden west,
When summer’s sun goes down to rest.
Were you with me, &c.

“ The graces of her pillowy breast,
That swelled beneath the envious vest,
What mortal song might e’en portray,
That rolls not smooth and fair as they ?
Were you with me, &c.

“ My Nancy used to stroll with me
And sit beneath the shadowy tree,
(My arm around her slender waist ;
Her snow-white arm my neck embraced.)
Were you with me, &c.

“ How sweet the moments used to pass
When I was with my Cambridge lass, —
When seated there beneath the shade,
When mutual love our stay delayed !
Were you with me, &c.

“ And there we talked and there we sung ;
Nor minded we the bells that rung ; —
And if we parted with a kiss,
'T was but to dream of future bliss.
Were you with me, &c.”

XVII.

Fathers, there 's nothing half so deleterious
To “ under-graduates,” as too much money : —
(I speak what I have *seen*, not felt.) 'T is serious
For one to surfeit him, even with honey,
Or any other sweet, deceitful thing : —
Money, — it is the Student's ruining !

XVIII.

“ No man can serve two masters ; he will either ; ” —

 You know the rest ; 't is even so with Pleasure
And Science : who seeks both, will find that neither
 Amounts to much ; the one, is squandered treasure ;
The other, *sham*. — Many a son has been
Borne back home, “ *dead . . . in trespasses and in sin.* ”

XIX.

Simply because his father, in his folly,
 Supplied him with the means, to “ ride out,” “ spree,”
And “ act the rowdy,” and be styled “ a jolly
 Fellow.” He will not study, but must see
The world and feel its pleasures, or else be at a
“ Model Artistes' ” performance, or a theatre !

XX.

No wonder that he *goes* ; for “ money,” Say says,
 “ Serves as the lubricating fluid to the
Wheels of society : ” and those gay places, —
 The home of dissipation, and the Fury,
Called Fashion, — were it not for money, would not
Be visited ; simply because they *could not*. —

XXI.

Am I not moralizing ? — yet, perhaps,

It may do good. — But I was dreaming, and
The dream must end. Tread lightly on your taps,

My blue-eyed muse ; tread lightly through the land
Of dreams ; think not to press your tender heels
Into “ the sands of time,” and hear the peals

XXII.

Of after generations’ windy praises : —

’T is better far to live an honest man,
And, when you die, look up and see the *daisies*

Only upon your grave, — ’t is better than, —
Like Cæsar, to be great, and, having crushed
The world, bear *tons of marble* on your groaning dust !

XXIII.

Remember, I was up in that piazza

Between two worlds ; and she, — that flirting Vision, —
Was promenading with the Student, as a

Couple of dancers, *waltzing* — not division,
I mean, enough between them : — (waltzing is a
Dangerous dance ; it makes young people dizzy ;

XXIV.

And then, they sometimes *fall* ; and then, you know,
This brings a scandal on all other dances
Among the Puritanic ; those who go,
Rightly, for ancient customs, not for France's ;
And hence, I recommend the good old fashioned
Dancings ; these waltzes are too much *impassioned* !

XXV.

Besides, it always seemed to me as if a
Beau'd break a young belle's back, to yerk her round
In such a perilous twirl, were it not stiffer
Than it appears to be, and tightly bound
With *stays* together, like the rigging of a
Tall ship.) — But then she never fears her lover :

XXVI.

'Twas even so with Nancy ; she was walking
Calmly — not coolly though — with that tall Student,
As I have just described ; and they were talking
Soft, tender things, no doubt, and most imprudent
Alike for both. 'Twas dusk ; “ the moon was rising,”
Of course, with virgin blush, — 't was not surprising !

XXVII.

I should have blushed myself, had I not been
All-boiling-over-full of indignation, —
Which swallows up all other reddening, —
At this my sky-high, rocking, dizzying station !
I should have sworn ; — but then no gentleman
Will ever swear, but hold in, if he can !

XXVIII.

“ Confound the girl ! ” I said ; “ Confound the fuss ! ” —
Then, all at once, the scene was changed ; I dreamed
I saw them in a Cambridge omnibus ; —
And then “ the buss ” tipt over ! and she screamed ;
But ’scaped unharmed ; — and then, — Oh ! it was cruel, —
That very week, I dreamed, they fought a duel.

XXIX.

It seems that he had sent a *billet-doux*
To her, which some one else had intercept,
And written, in its stead, a letter to
Nancy of quite a different kind, and kept
The real one ; and Nancy wrote in turn
To him, these “ thoughts that breathe and words that burn : ”

XXX.

*“ Oh ! most unfeeling, cruel, treacherous fellow !
You wrote ; ’t is done ! and I have done with thee ! ”
Alas ! my heart ! — ’t is melting now, like tallow,
With unextinguishable love ! — I’ll be
Revenged ! — And like a man of honor, cruel
Young man, I challenge you to fight a duel ! ! ! ”*

XXXI.

The Student was no coward. To refuse
Was not his nature. Now in all such cases
The challenged have the privilege to choose
The weapons, their own seconds, times and places :
And he, of course, in knightly, classic phrase
Wrote back to her th’ acceptance, time and place :

XXXII.

*“ My own sweet Nancy ! if it be that thou
Art thirsting for my blood, and seekest to kill
Me dead, thy will be done ; and I will bow
Submissively : this very night, I will,
At set of sun, meet thee, and thou shalt take
“ Pop-squirts,” and fight with me on ‘ Cambridge Lake ! ’ ”*

XXXIII.

True to their word, the furious lovers met

To quench their mutual rage, in that unknown
Fantastic way. The golden sun had set

Far in the west. Unseconded, alone,
The two young duellists were in a boat,
And on the centre of the pond afloat.

XXXIV.

Oh! God! and can it be that each of two,

Who have such mutual hate, should wish to give
To each a *chance* to blow each other through

The brains or heart? — I should prefer to live
By all means, — but, if I *must* die, 't would be
Foolish to do 't, to *please an enemy*!

XXXV.

Fighting is dreadful silly; — but a battle

Is much more sensible than duelling;
The first is like a slaughter-house of cattle

And sheep and hogs, wherein a Prince, or King,
Or President, are butchers, and do not
Butcher *themselves* with bombs and swords and shot;

XXXVI.

Nor rush to sudden death. Instead of going
To fight ; they stay at home, *to oversee* ! —
To use a homely phrase ; they “ do the *hoeing* ”
Per alios ; under some shadowy tree
They smoke, and, while “ the boys ” bring hills and dirt,
To them, they hoe the corn ; — ’t is sweaty work ! —

XXXVII.

But then, they reap the harvest, — glory, too ! —
And the Historian will write it “ brown ; ”
That battle was a second Waterloo !
Great man ! he knocked a Sister Nation down !
He killed her sons and daughters ! “ bunged ” her eyes ! —
And bore away immortal victories !

XXXVIII.

Besides, there seems to be no other way
To “ raise ” our Presidents : we want to know
Of what their skulls are made ; for in *our day*
There are so many formed of yielding “ dough,”
’T is best to choose one whose *thick* cranium
Cannot be fractured by a hostile bomb !

XXXIX.

Again, beside our martial President,

There must be under-officers, whose duty
It is to legislate, and represent

The People. Warriors must be paid in booty,
Money, or honors ; hence I would suggest,
(I trust the Nation, too, will deem it best,)

XL.

That we elect "*The Volunteers*" to all

Our minor offices ; they all are "*ready*"
And "*rough*," like "*Zac*,"—to meet their Country's call :

All unemploy'd, and more, they're *sometimes* steady!—
Cambridge and Boston, listen ! choose your Mayors
From those bold Mexicanian-woman slayers !

XLI.

They fought our battles for us, glorious fellows !

They revelled in the "Halls of Mexico !"
They saved our Country's honor from the gallows !

They struck ! they laid our *proud invaders* low ! —
Shall we, by "base ingratitude," repay
Those lofty souls, whom bullets would not slay ?

XLII.

Hear me ! my Country ! — “ Hear me for my cause ! ”

You must have officers ; and who ? ay, who, —
If not the *great defenders* of your laws, —

Deserve to make them ? — Webster never blew
A man’s brains out ; he’s a Civilian ; we
Must have a man, who has *stabbed, at least, one enemy !*

XLIII.

What though he cannot read, nor speak, nor write ? —

There are enough who can, and who will give
Him aid, and “ *write his letters !* ” — He can *fight* ;

’Tis all we want, — a *strong Executive !* —
’Tis false to say that *knowledge, intellect,*
Experience and so forth, can *protect !*

XLIV.

I am no politician ; but I feel,

Sometimes, a little kind of patriotic :
I wish well for my country’s highest weal,

And fain would save her from the dark, chaotic
Regions, to which she’s rushing, like an ass ! —
Warriors ! to arms ! — three cheers for “ Zac ” and Cass ! —

XLV.

But where are our young duellists ? — Alack !

We left them in the midst of “ Cambridge Lake ; ”
And night was gathering round them fast and black :

But night, nor dew, nor waters could not slake
Their rage. No, had the lake been thick with ice,
And not yet thawed by beams of beauteous eyes,

XLVI.

They still had raged. — There was a perfect calm ;

The boat lay still ; and they were gazing ; he
In Nancy’s eyes ; while she leaned on his arm,

In all her round voluptuosity,
Gazing on him ! Their gaze was silent, sad, —
A gaze pugnacious, amorous, fearful, mad !

XLVII.

Men are uncommonly polite, ’t is said,

And shake hands, just before they fight a duel. —
I never saw a *calf* knocked in the head,

Without a shriek : how could I bear so cruel
A sight as this, I feared, would soon disgrace
New England’s fairest, shadyest watering place ?

XLVIII.

I raised my eyes aloft ; a cloud, between
Me and the earth, hid all the fearful sight.
I thanked my stars ; and on the fairy scene
Of that piazza gazed with “ wild delight.”
It was a princely place, and every part
Adorned with pearls and gems and works of art.

XLIX.

Statues and paintings charmed the wondering eye ;
And many a scene historic graced the wall,
The poet and the painter seemed to vie
Upon the self-same canvass, for they all
Had gilded frames, whose golden letters told,
Descriptive of the piece, some legend high and old.

L.

One there was there, — I seem to see it now ; —
It was an antique picture, and it bore,
Inscribed around, this unknown legend, how
This Western Continent, long years before
The Flood, was peopled. — 'T was a simple tale,
Descriptive of the landing and the setting sail :

OF

DOLDO AND DADA.

I.

In earliest time, —
A tale sublime : —
On Europe's western coast
Two lovers strayed,
As the evening shade
Led forth the starry host.

Young amorous pair :
The youth was fair ;
The maid, a beautiful Eve. —
Why sadly talk
They, as they walk ? —
Love was not born to grieve.

“ Ah ! Dada ! ” — sighed
The youth, “ my bride
Thou can'st not be ! ” and placed
His arm around
Her neck ; she wound
Her arm around his waist.

“ Our fathers are
At deadly war,
Thou know’st ! This very day
He called me near, —
Thou do’st not hear ! —
Ah ! hast thou swooned away !

“ Speak, Dada, speak ! —
Thy glowing cheek
Was never cold before ! ” —
“ Go on my dear,”
She sighed, “ I hear,
But soon shall hear no more ! ”

“ A father’s curse
Had parted us :
This very day he swore ;
‘ Take Dada’s hand,
And house and land
And home thou hast no more ! ’

“ But I will be
A home to thee ! ”
The tearful Dada cries ;
“ The world is wide,
And on the tide
A father’s frigate lies !

“ Ah! threeply worse
A father's curse
I, too, have shared : ‘ Thy life ’
This day he swore,
‘ Shall be no more,
The hour thou 'rt Doldo's wife ! ’

“ Wilt fly with me?
Far in the sea
There lies an island fair :
Three nights ago
I dreamed it so,
And you and I were there ! ”

“ Ah! Dada ! ” cried
The youth, “ My bride,
Thou 'rt worth a thousand farms !
And more than this
Of earthly bliss
Crave not these clasping arms ! ” —

Strained to his heart
No more to part
He holds fair Dada now.
Thus on the beach
Each vows to each,
And kisses seal the vow.

The stars above
Record their love ;
Record their nuptial vow : —
In ancient days
Were shorter ways
Of marrying than now.

“ Full of supplies
The frigate lies ;
My father’s men, to-morrow,
Sail ere the dawn ; —
‘ She ’s lost ! she ’s gone ! ’
They ’ll wail, I ween, to-morrow ! ”

He said ; and bore
Far from the shore
Fair Dada round his neck :
He stems the tide,
He bears his bride ; —
They reach the frigate’s deck.

No sailor there ; —
The anchor’s care
Was all that kept the ship : —
The rope with brave
Soul cut, he gave
His father-land the slip !

He hoists the sails ; —
Strong eastern gales
Blow freshly from the shore ; —
And ere the day
They are far away,
And never were heard of more !

I I .

Till once, it is said, as the morning red
Shone over the Western World,
The frigate appeared : — wild animals feared
And back to the forest whirled.

At first but a speck ; but soon on the deck
Brave Doldo was seen, and another ;
'T was Dada, and pressed to her beautiful breast
Twin infants, for she was a mother.

Their dangers are o'er ; they are safe on the shore,
No mortal to tyrannize o'er them :
What more could they ask than in pleasures to bask
Of a continent stretching before them ?

And many a year, twin infants they rear
To people this wilderness then ;
Till Dada had died, and close by her side
Lay he, the oldest of men.

And it came to pass, as they danced on the grass,
That the virgins were fair to behold
In the eyes of the men ; and they married them then
Before they were twenty years old.

And they multiplied fast, and the wilderness passed
Away with its terrors and frowns ;
And fair as the rose, the Continent blows
With fields and with gardens and towns.

And cities they built, and mansions begilt,
And temples that reached to the skies ;
And they worship and sing till the corridors ring ; —
And odors and incense arise.

And war was unknown ; the bugle unblown,
And the drum rolled not for the battle ;
No armies' alarms ; no clashing of arms ;
No loud artillery's rattle.

No inordinate lust called "dust unto dust,"
Ere their lives were but half of a span ;
But they lived till they died, and lost not the pride
Of godlike, immaculate man !

Too blissful to last, like a vision they passed,
The antediluvian times !
Ah ! bright was the day, but it faded away
In a night of delusion and crimes !



LI.

There was another picture there ; it seemed
To move with life ; a sad, celestial story,
As though the poet and the painter dreamed
Together one long, soul-like allegory.
It was a mournful, but instructive strain ;
The scene far west of Paradise, — THE BIRTH OF CAIN :

Their swords of fire, the angel choir
Were waving in the skies,
At evening's fall, high o'er the wall
Of guarded Paradise ;

And as they sung — on rainbows swung —
 Of justice and of love,
Though mortal ear no sound could hear,
 Their notes were heard above ; —
(For spirit sounds may have no bounds,
 On heavenly ether borne,
Until they reach the farthest beach
 Of endless space, where morn
With evening meets, and Chaos beats
 With his blue surges far
Beyond the home where comets roam,
 Or shines a twinkling star ;
Or till they meet and mingle sweet
 With music of the spheres,
That humming through the vaulted blue,
 Sound sweet in heavenly ears ;
But none may hear save angel's ear
 And spirits of the blest,
Whom oft, 't is said, on azure bed,
 It sweetly lulls to rest ;)
While thus they sung, o'er Eden swung, —
 Far on her natal globe,
From slumber broke and dreaming woke
 The goddess Hope, with robe

From shoulders thrown, amazed, alone
Did list the silver chime.
One tear she shed, and swiftly sped
To earth's far distant clime.
Swifter than thought with fancy fraught,
Sweet messenger of love,
She wings her way, and e'er the day,
Descending from above,
Brought dusky night, she ends her flight
Far west of Paradise,
Where Adam stood in pining mood,
And Eve with tearful eyes
Sat on the sod late cursed of God,
Her first born in her arms, —
A new-born child that had not smiled
Upon a mother's charms;
But ever wept and never slept
In slumbers calm and deep —
Yet still would cry (they knew not why,)
But deemed it born to weep.
“Is this the lot that all begot
By me are doomed to bear?”
The father cried, “would we had died
E'er he'd inhaled the air!

Then woe and pain our infant Cain
 (And for a parent's crimes,)
Had never shared, and millions spared
 Had been in after times!"

But tearful Eve alone could grieve, —
 Her heart too big within;
Her dewy eye made deep reply,
 She felt the curse of sin.

But closer pressed unto her breast
 She strained her infant now,
And kissed away the bitter spray
 That fell upon his brow.

"Behold! behold! what form in gold
 And heavenly radiance dressed,
(As fair to view as first I knew
 Thee in the garden blessed,)
Approaches now, with placid brow,
 Like those in Paradise

We used to meet! Prepare to greet
 The guest with cheerful eyes."

He scarce had spoke and silence broke
 To his afflicted love,
E'er borne on wings dipt in the springs
 Of diamond founts above,

The Goddess came, whilst ambient flame
 Played gentle round her head,
And with a face all heavenly grace,
 'T was thus she smiling said :
“ Hail, noble pair ! as angels fair,
 Sole lords of beauteous earth !
Why may ye weep in sadness deep,
 When fresh as at its birth,
All nature smiles, and e'en beguiles,
 By 'ts witching loveliness,
Of blooming flowers and vocal bowers,
 The spirits down from bliss ?
Earth was not made and thus arrayed
 In robes of living light,
That ye should weep, — it was to keep
 Your hearts as cheerful, bright,
And fair and fresh (though human flesh,)
 As nature's face benign.
Away with sadness ! for 't is madness
 To murmur and repine ! ”
While yet she spoke, behold ! there broke
 From out a shady grove
A timid deer ; and bounding near,
 A monster lion strove

To reach his prey ; now far away
 The nimble buck has fled.
Back to his den the lion then
 Turned his fierce, shaggy head.
“And such the pride,” thus Adam cried,
 “Of mortal, earthly bliss !
'T is ever so ! where e'er we go
 Some bloody monster is !
'T was even thus, (O ruined us !)
 While in the Garden yet
We roamed, for there where pleasures are
 Found most, most ills beset !
'T were vain to fly ! 't were vain to try, —
 New snares each step attend ;
The lion still will have his fill, —
 The lambkin must his end ! ”
Hope sweetly smiled, and answered mild, —
 “ E'en now, escaped from fate,
Behold the deer, secure from fear,
 Strays feeding with his mate.
The lion's paw, the tiger's jaw,
 Harm not the harmless hare.
Their wings shall guard from bloody pard
 The warbling birds of air.

Shall reasoning man be void of plan
 To escape from fancied ills
Or those that be ! 't is easy, — flee
 Like roe-buck on the hills.”
She paused, and lo ! down bending low
 She plucked a budding rose,
Sweet scented, and with fairy hand
 Held to the infant's nose
The simple flower, whose magic power
 Lit up a dimple smile
On lip and cheek, that seemed to speak
 Of inward joy the while.
His baby arm to grasp the charm
 Forsook the mother's breast :
He holds the rose, — his joy o'erflows, —
 His sobs are lulled to rest.
Delighted stood in pensive mood
 The father of our race ;
His bride and child before him smiled,
 And smiles played o'er his face.
Hope saw and raised her wings that blazed
 With a celestial light,
And once anew heaven-ward she flew,
 And melted from their sight.

And where she went an arch was bent,
Binding the heavens and earth,
And seemed a way where souls might stray
From first to second birth.
And the angel choir, whose swords of fire
Were waving in the skies,
At evening's fall, high o'er the wall
Of guarded Paradise,
No more were seen with dreadful sheen
Of flaming brands on high ; —
They too had fled and backward sped
To homes above the sky.

LII.

There was another saddening landscape there, —
Which made me weep only to look upon ; —
An old, decrepit man, with silvery hair
And trembling limbs, ('t was at the set of sun,)
Leaned on his staff ; and with a mournful look
Thus chided with his boyhood's babbling brook :

“ Cease, fair brooklet, cease thy roaring !

 Cease one moment, while I tell thee
Who I am, that, here deploring,
 On thy banks would now address thee.

“ Cease, fair brooklet, cease thy roaring !

 You and I were young together —
Now life's sun is swiftly lowering ;
 Dark and gloomy grows the weather !

“ Cease, fair brooklet, cease thy roaring !

 White and frozen winter chills me —
Why should snows be on me pouring,
 While the Spring with flowerets fills thee !

“ Cease, fair brooklet, cease thy roaring !

 Once I loved thy childish prattle ;
Now it sounds like one deploring
 Youth and beauty slain in battle !

“ Cease, fair brooklet, cease thy roaring,

 Did I bid thee ? Never, never !
But, beside my grave still pouring,
 Dance and prattle roaring ever ! ”

LIII.

I dropt a tear, and turned aside to view

A large historic picture, that was hung
High on my left. — But sudden, as I drew

Nigh it, the bridge shakes ! and an unknown tongue
Salutes my ears ! — I turned to gaze upon
The ghost, — it was the Cambridge Mastodon !

LIV.

“Angels and ministers of grace, defend us !”

I shrieked. She stood in silence on me gazing ; —
A most gigantic ghost, with wings stupendous,

And eyes that were like two great comets blazing ! —
“Young man !” she said, with a sarcastic frown,
“The Faculty have sent me here to bring you down !

LV.

“The Proctors have reported you for being

Tardy at prayers !” Thus, with a genuflexion,
She spake, and bade me mount. I did so, seeing

That I was “sent for” from that dread direction ! —
She spreads her wings, and, like a monstrous hawk,
Sails through the night, but cheers the way with friendly
talk :

I.

“ ’T will take us nearly half an hour to go
To Cambridge City : — should you wish to know
My history, — unknown to mortal man, —
Listen : — I am an Antediluvian !
I saw the everlasting waters rise, —
Mountains descend, and ocean lift the skies ; —
The monsters of the deep usurp the place,
Where guilty man had reigned, and the sinless race
Of animals ! — I heard the dying groans
Of a drowning world, commingling with the tones
Of heaven’s artillery, rattling over the deep,
Borne on by tempests in their maddening sweep !
While, like a band of Gabriels brandishing high
Their flaming swords, fork’d lightnings split the sky !
Now like some lost, some damnèd, hideous soul,
The Northern Lights danced towards the antarctic pole,
Threading the waves ! — The very stars did weep,
For grief, big tears that falling swelled the deep !
Mercy was deaf : the avenging angel strode
Above the world : driven from their dark abode,
Deep in the womb of earth, fiends rose and cried
And howled and shrieked, awhile, along the tide,
Seizing the spirits of drowning men, and bore
Them to that world where floods shall drown no more !

II.

“ Now had the waters lifted high
Above the world the floating sky :
For forty days and forty nights
The rain descended, and the heights
Of all the mountains sank to be
Lost in that world-embracing sea.

But where was I ? and where those,
Who with me on the waters rose ?
For two there were : the one a fair
Young girl, the chaste, the pure Gallnair.
Her eyes were like the evening star ;

Her lips sweet as the myrtle ;
Her locks like sunset clouds afar ;

Her voice soft as the turtle.
She dwelt high on a mountain side,
And kept me for herself to ride :
On lofty pannel raised on high
I bore her 'twixt the earth and sky ;
And, as we bounded over the plains,
She cheered the way with tuneful strains :
At morn we sought the mountain height,
And scoured the plains in the evening light. —
She only chaste and pure remained,
When here the mighty Deluge reigned. —

The floods arose ; she mounted me,
Her refuge on that boundless sea.
But who was he now at her side ?
A youth, who had sought her for his bride,
In vain ; but when the rains descended,
She pitied him, and thus befriended.

I bore them up, and paddled round
For forty days, nor touched the ground. —
The sun breaks forth at last, and hark !
They shout, “ a ship ! ” — ’T was “ Noah’s Ark.”

III.

“ ’T was supper time : all, saving Ham,
Had gone to prayers and down to *cram*.
He stands alone high on the deck,
And softly hails the floating speck.
He deemed the maid exceeding fair,
And longed to save the chaste Gallnair.
He throws to her a twisted rope,
And bids her grasp her only hope.
She seizes it. Ham pulls ; her lover,
While helping, hoisting her, fell over ! —
Him Ham cared not so much to save,
And left him to a watery grave ;

But in the top-loft of the ship
He hides Gallnair, the rosy-lip! —
Nor Noah nor, Shem, nor Japhet knew
Of this addition to the crew :
But well they noticed every day,
That Ham stole off, and used to stay
Long time alone ; they knew not why,
But deemed it wondrous piety.

IV.

“ Now sailing on directly west, —
The Rocky Mountains show their crest.
But, ah ! alas ! for poor Gallnair ! —
Noah’s sons had found that she was there,
And told their sire ; who orders Ham
To send her into the mighty *dam*,
From whence she came ; for it was made
To drown the world and every maid !
“ Oh ! save the *fair* ! dear father save
This spouse of mine a watery grave ! ”
Cries Ham. — Frowning, old Noah replied,
“ I know her not ! she is no bride ! —
Lo ! *there* thy only partner stands,
With rolling eyes and lifted hands. ” —

Ham answering, weeps, “ father, ’t is true,
She is *one* wife — and *this* makes *two* ! ” —
“ One wife ’s enough ! ” growls Noah, and so
Must this wild ocean mermaid go !

v.

“ Amen ! ” cry *Ham’s wife*, Shem and Japhet ;
And in their stony hearts not a bit
Of pity dwelt. — Ham scarce could speak,
Before they placed her on the peak
Of the Rocky Mountains, towering now
Well nigh the Ark, before the prow !

On shoots the Ark ; but as they go,
Ham from the stern with manly throw
Sends her a keg of crackers, and
Raisins and cheese, waving his hand. —

On sailed the Ark, until it sat
High on the side of Ararat.
I saw it fading in the west,
And went to my eternal rest.
I died, and floated everywhere. —
But would’st thou know how fared Gallnair ?
She lived, and as the waters fell,
She left the mountain for the dell.

She sought a warm secluded place ;
Great Mother of the Indian race.

VI.

“ Now when the earth was nearly dry,
High on a hemlock rested I,
An hundred fathoms in the sky !
Bees in my body built their hive :
Even though dead, I seemed alive. —
At last a terrible tempest came :
Loud thunders roar ; fork'd lightnings flame !
The hemlock broke, — a frightful crash !
My body fell with ponderous plash
Deep into the mud below, and stuck
For ages in New Jersey muck !

But all, who are in their graves, shall rise
And wipe the dust out of their eyes !
My time, at last, I felt was coming ;
I knew it by an ominous humming.
They dug me up ! — The first of all
My tribe, I graced a College wall ! ”

LVI.

She ended ; and I heard a frightful pounding ? —

It was the Goody, with her “ broom and pail.”

The bell for morning prayers had long been sounding !

She says, “ what makes you look so very pale ? ” —

“ I ve had a dream.” — “ Spring to ’t, or you ’ll be late ! ” —

“ Do’nt care ! ’T was worth “ *a part* ” among the “ *Second
Eight !* ” —

LVII.

This, doubtless, *was* one of the longest dreams,

I ever dreamed : ’t was quite too long ; but then

’T was better to do this, than to write themes

That might have better pleased the thoughtless train,

Or even those self-righteous souls, who love

The shameful thing, and yet the thing reprove !



CHILDE HARVARD.

CANTO IV.

“Lives of great men all remind us.” — LONGFELLOW.

CHILDE HARVARD.



CANTO IV.

“Lives of great men all remind us.” — LONGFELLOW.

I.

CITY of Science, dust, and trees! thy shades,
Thy classic walks, thy winding stream, — thy lake,
The haunt of Muses or of Cyprian maids, —
“Porter’s,” “Mount Auburn,” and the like;—’t will take
One canto more, at least, to tell thy story,
And to embalm Childe Harvard in a *cloud* of glory!

II.

We left the little fellow rudely “*crammed*,” —

Two cantos back, — into the Student’s pocket,
Streaking like mist !—Much were his young limbs jammed

From side to side ; for, like some golden locket
On a fair dancing maiden’s breast, he flew,
This way and that, through Cambridge dust and dew !

III.

Long was the race : “ it suits me not to tell,”

How far, nor through what varied scenes he passed,
In that dark night ; — what “ hair-breadth scapes ” befel,

What “ *moving accidents*.” — A veil is cast
Around it all. Some loftier bard, ere long,
May solve the mystery in high *dactylic* song ! —

IV.

Mine be the lowlier task of simply telling

The tale “ as it was told to me.” My muse,
That night, was sick, or absent, or was dwelling

On loftier themes, or in Castilian dews
Meandering : — she is like a *swan* in all
Respects, except she cannot — sing at-all !

V.

But then she feels melodious, and there is
More music in her heart than on her tongue :
“The music of the spheres” is perfect bliss
To her ; — she told me once, the stars were strung
Together by a telegraphic wire ! —
And I told her, she was a perfect — *Lyre* !

VI.

She told me that Le Verrier was not
Inhabited by men, but empty shades : —
In ancient times the weather was so hot
One summer there, that all the trees and blades
Of grass were withered up ; and all the men
And women melted into nothing then,

VII.

And beasts and birds !—all, save their *ghosts*, were *drained* !
Awhile they grumbled at so wild and strange
A freak of nature ; but have since remained
Contented, for they find it takes less *change*
To live without a body, than to keep
It by devouring herbs and cows and sheep !

VIII.

There are innumerable other things

That compensate their loss : — they need no clothes,
Nor carriages ; (of course, they all have wings

And talk in poetry instead of prose !)

They need no presidents, nor kings ; they deem
All equal, for all are exactly as they seem ;

IX.

And one man looks directly through another !

They cannot *kill*, having no flesh to *stab* !

They tried to fight, at first, but found it rather

Hurt *them*, more than their foes. One sought to *grab*
Another by the throat ; the other flew
At him ; unharmed each passed the other through !

X.

Oh ! that Republics, men and nations were

Divested of their flesh, “ and all the lusts
Thereof,” on earth ! — thus *driven* to prefer

A Christian peace, to all the fiery bursts
Of bloody war ! ’Tis vain : they still will beat
And gash and gore and stab and tear each other’s meat !

XI.

Childe Harvard, — where was he? 'T is only known
That he was safely lodged, next day, by some
Kind hand, without his mother, all alone,
In Cambridge Alms House; 't is the only home
For strangers in the place! — Through fear of sin,
Or something *worse*, the *City* has no “*public inn*!”

XII.

Childe Harvard screamed, as well he might, to see
So many strangers; and the Landlord wrote,
Next morn, directed to the Faculty
And President, this hasty, pithy note:
“Whereas, instead of carrying to its ma'am's-house,
Some cruel one has sent to Cambridge Alms-House,

XIII.

“A certain Child; I warn the Faculty
And all concerned, forthwith, to ascertain
(’T will *save* the town from *rearing* him, you see!)
From whence he came; and carry him back again!!
If there be any known, or thought of; then ’t is
But just to make him stand ‘*in loco parentis*!’

XIV.

“ The child was left, — it cannot be disputed, —
In your domains ; and we have called his name,
' *Harvard*,' both from the place and his reputed
Parents ; and you must either bear the shame, —
You or some of your *under-graduates*, — or
Support the child, and change his name by law ! ”

XV.

These were hard terms, and most insinuating,
And most derogatory to the boys
And Faculty : — but every thing relating
To conflagrations, rogueries and noise,
Of *course*, the Students father ! — should a hay-
Stack burn from *lightning-bugs* ! it would be *they* !!

XVI.

It is not fair ; and yet, should all the mothers
Of Cambridge leave, — as soon as they were born, —
Their infants in the College yard, no others
Except the Students must endure the scorn ! —
The Faculty resolved to nip, 't is said,
The bud, and knock the subject in the head.

XVII.

'T was Monday night, and bright the lamps were shining,
In many a cloistered room, — from “Massachusetts,”
“Hollis,” “Holworthy,” “Stoughton;” — and reclining
On cushioned couch, — as infants hold their new “têts
Of sugar,” — many a student held his book,
Or his cigar, with meditative look.

XVIII.

The Faculty had just assembled, bearing
Upon their lofty brows the marks of strong
Resolve : they all had sworn, or now were swearing,
To perish, or redress the shameful wrong !
Ah ! terrible the clash, when Greeks meet Greeks !
Listen, 't is *he* ; — behold him, where he speaks :

XIX.

“ This is one of those elementary
Occasions, Gentlemen, in which we sow
Seeds that may spring up in eternity ! —
To elevate the humble, and bring low
The lofty, has been truly said to be
The height of Art and Eloquence and Poetry.

XX.

“ You, Gentlemen, are doubtless, all aware
That Tuesday night, between the hours of ’leven
And twelve o’clock, . . . a child . . . was left somewhere,—
Abandoned to the guardian eye of Heaven, —
Within the College yard ! — The City Powers, —
Without a cause, I *trust*, — have called it ours !

XXI.

“ To rid ourselves of this disgrace, and hurl
Suspicion to the winds, we must resolve
To act like men. Be not like a timid girl
Upon her bridal eve ! — *reason, resolve,*
At first, like sages ; *then*, in calm debate,
Let each his wise excogitations state.

XXII.

“ You all have read the *prolegomena*,
Sent by the City Powers, directed to
The College, President and Faculty : —
Few circumstances, in the long review
Of centuries, — from Noah to Charlemagne,
From Charlemagne to us, — have given me greater pain !

XXIII.

“ A young . . . *immortal* . . . *soul*, in that *frail* casket —
A tender infant's body — left alone
Under the pump, laid in a little basket ;
An infant, that, perchance, had graced a throne, —
Had he been born, with more propitious stars, —
Led ‘Senates at his heels,’ and heard the World's huzzas!—

XXIV.

“ *A young, immortal, soul*, — thrown on the wide,
Wild ocean of existence, to be cast
By every storm and moon directed tide
This way and that, the sport of every blast, —
Demands our notice : — *Pindar* *deigned* to roll
His verse in praise of *horses* ; *an immortal soul*,

XXV.

“ Wherever it may be, should draw to it, —
Even as the magnet points to where the ore
Lies buried in the earth's embowelled pit, —
All who have souls themselves. We ask no more.
You, Gentlemen, I hope, will now *discuss* :—
The child will soon arrive here in the omnibus.”

XXVI.

He ended ; and another arose ; his eye
Was piercing as an eagle's, for he looks
Upon the Sun, and threads immensity
In thoughts, and writes its wonders in his books.
Le Verrier ! “ westward the star ” of Science
Has winged its way, and boldly bids the world defiance !

XXVII.

“ Shall we, — we Gentlemen of the Faculty, —
Shall we (not *can* we, for no one denies
Our powers) father all the infancy
Of Cambridge ? or give heed to all the cries
Of folly, ignorance and superstition ?
If so, ours is an *enviable* condition !

XXVIII.

“ We're called upon to give an explanation
As to the parents of the child ! — Here is
' *A manifest absurdity !* ' — Th' *equation*
Has, in the *first* place, no *known quantities* !
And in the *second* place, I cannot see
Even, as yet, one *unknown* quantity ! ”

XXIX.

“ *One unknown quantity*,” replied the former,
“ Will soon arrive here in the omnibus :
Till then, through fear the argument grow warmer
Than might seem good, and wholly decorous ; —
With your permission, Gentlemen, I may
Amuse your fancies in a more fantastic way.

XXX.

“ I hold here, in my hand, a document, —
It has a *distant* bearing on the topic
Before us now, — a poem, written and sent
In hither, by our learnèd, philanthropic
And most poetic friend ; who, — I regret, —
Is absent, owing to the *mud* and *dew*bious wet.

XXXI.

“ ‘ *Messieurs, mes très chers Frères !* ’ (this is a letter
Of his to us,) ‘ I feel, I owe no slight
Apology for absence ; were it better
Walking, and I not indisposed, this night
Would hear my voice, ‘ *toujours riant*,’ among
You of the head and heart and classic tongue !

XXXII.

“ The only substitute, that I can send,
Is this slight scroll, replete with airy fancies,
Composed by me and by our *mutual* friend, —
Who bends on Nature most poetic glances,
And feels in her embrace, of roseate charms,
A pleasure scarcely less than in his partner’s arms! —

XXXIII.

“ All, that is beautiful in Nature, fills us
With rhapsodies! we never see a beauty-
Ful flower, or tree, or maiden, — but it thrills us
With most delirious throbs! — There is a *Psuchè*, —
A *soul*, — pervading all: it is that thing
‘ Which moves itself; ’ from whence all motions spring:

XXXIV.

“ It sets the *embryo* of the egg rotating
About its *nucleus*; it starts the flower
And bud of every plant; — the all-creating
Agent of Him, who boundless is in power,
Knowledge and love and majesty: — to *feel*
Its presence *every where*, creates the poet’s zeal.

XXXV.

“You, Gentlemen, I know, can sympathize
With us in this : you can appreciate
Our little work ; and what the word denies
You will not fail to give, — and please to state
Your views accordingly. — Our humble Scroll
Is called,

‘AN AFTERNOON MOUNT AUBURN STROLL.’

“Sweet Auburn, loveliest village of the plain!” — GOLDSMITH.

“Hence gifted bards
Have ever loved the calm and quiet shades.” — LONGFELLOW.

“The shapes, that haunt thy gloom,
Make signs to us and move their withered lips
Across the gulf of doom.” — LOWELL.

XXXVI.

“It was a soul-like afternoon, in that
Poetic month of August ; — flowery, quaint
And dusty-hoodèd month. Alone I sat,
Secluded, gazing at the clouds ; — a faint
And scarcely audible whisper in my soul,
Thus warned me forth to a meandering stroll :

XXXVII.

“ ‘ Go, seek the village of the dead ! and learn
From their hushed lips, the holy end of life :
Let its umbrageous stillness quench the burn
And the perpetual broil of human strife.
Go ! like the cowlèd monk, and silent nun,
And meditate the trees and flowers and tombs among ! ’

XXXVIII.

“ I heard the voice, and like the Apostle Paul, —
When vision-smitten in his mad career, —
‘ Not disobedient to the heavenly call,’
I heard it as the voice of gray-beard Seer
In medieval times ; and toward the shade,
Half conscious and enrapt my gaitered footsteps strayed.

XXXIX.

“ It was a soul-like afternoon ; the dust, —
That ever present monitor to tell
Us what we are, — like spirits of the just
Upon the Judgment day, or floating tail
Of flying peacock or the albatross,
Filled all the air with golden clouds of sun-beam dross !

XL.

“ Now had I reached the lofty entrance, high
Upon whose sable cap-stone stands the text ;
‘ *For dust thou art !* ’ — my spirit heaved a sigh,
To feel this world so awfully near the next ! —
With thoughts of dissolution crowding fast
Upon my soul, my footsteps through the portal passed.

XLI.

“ My mind was dust and ashes, and I deemed
Myself a creeping thing, — a chrysalis ! —
When suddenly upon my vision beamed
A form, that bore more of the world of bliss
About her than of earth ; and in my eye
She seemed the chrysalis, changed to the butterfly !

XLII.

“ Others were there — but none so houri-seeming —
With looks as gay and ball-room-like, as if
There were no death, and all the living, teeming
Millions of earth, were away free from grief !
She leaned upon a Student’s arm ! — *His eye*
Frowned on me as I passed — ‘ *contempt of Faculty !* ’ ” —

XLIII.

The reader paused, for there arose a rustling
Among his auditors : just indignation
Glowed fiercely on their brows. And there was bustling,
And rising “ in hot haste,” as ’t were the nation
Called them to arms ! — One sprightlier than the rest
Obtained the floor, and thus *expulsive* thoughts expressed :

“ Gods ! can a *Cambridge* senate long debate
Which of the two to choose ; to bear an insult,
Or turn a Student off ! — Where is the shade
Of *Quin* ? — Where are the spirits of our fathers,
Those firm, unflinching heroes of the past,
Whom all the fiends of hell united could not
Drive from this *platform* of our constitution ? —
Shall they, as they look down from their high homes,
Behold us fickle, wavering as the wind ?
Believe it not ! Sirs, we will yet make known
And seen and felt the vigor of our arms
Invincible ! — the Students yet shall cow
Before us, as the slender reed before
The pelting whirlwind ! — What ? — ’t was scarce a year
Ago, when even a Senior, for his insolence
Shown towards a Dignitary of the College,

(Though slight and trivial in its nature when
Compared with this) received forthwith his sentence;
And, when the vote was put, even you did raise
Your hands, and sanctioned it! — I call again
Upon the fearless spirit ye there showed!
I do conjure you, in the name of all
The unblemished dignity of other times, —
Whose mantle, having fallen, rests on us—
I do conjure you, that ye suffer not
Contempt of College Faculty to go
Unpunished! I conjure you, that ye suffer
No more the spirit of Catonian rigor
Nightly to walk our streets complaining, and
Accusing us of folly and remissness!” —

XLIV.

He ended; and another, with a smile
Upon his milder brow, uprising, said:
“Perhaps ’t were better that we pause awhile,
Until the present document be read,
Before we act.” — It pleased them: and again
They listened to the poet’s mellow strain. —

XLV.

“ I pass them ; and beneath the whispering pines, —
Among whose pitchy, fragrant branches sings
The blue-bird, and the shrill-keyed locust whines, —
Am borne along by solemn thoughts, whose wings
Spread wider ever, as I pierce the shade ; —
When lo ! the guardian bust of Bowditch lifts its head.

XLVI.

“ The *compass* and the *quadrant* still ; the *globe*, —
Whose trackless seas he taught to sail, — beneath
His feet ; the ‘*Mecanique Celeste* ;’ the robe
Of veteran *voyager*, — all bespeak that death
Has only borne him to a nobler state,
Where Heaven’s high seas his spirit still may *navigate* !

XLVII.

“ Oh, Death ! why should we fear thee so ? — Thou art
The parent of our souls ; thou *hatchest* them
From out the egg of life : — the immortal part
Might never reach the ‘ New Jerusalem,’
Did’st thou not brood upon the egg-filled nest
Of earth, with thy black, frightful wings and hollow breast.

XLVIII.

“ There towers the Chapel, with its granite walls
And many pointed spires. — I like it not ;
Methinks a comelier dome should hold the palls
Of those, who rest them in this holy spot ! —
I left it, floating, as upon a sea
Of flowery thought, and reached the grave of ‘ Emily.’

XLIX.

“ I love to meditate upon that sleeping
And beautiful child ! How well it teaches me
That death is but a balmy slumber, keeping
Us for the morning of eternity !
How often, as I gaze, my thoughtful heart
Translates to me

‘ THE FLOWER’S REVENGE,’

From *Freiligrath*.

‘ On the couch’s downy cushion,
Sleep surrounded, rests the maiden ; —
Deeply sunk her auburn lashes,
And her cheeks with purple laden.

On the painted flower-stand glistening
Sits the vase, the costly token ;
In it flowers the many-tinted,
Dew-besprinkled, freshly broken.

Sultry air spreads damply brooding
Through the room the flowers are laid in ;
For the summer frights the coolness ; —
Windows closed confine the maiden.

Stillness round and deepest silence !
Sudden ! hark ! a gentle whisper !
In the blossoms, in the branches,
Moves a rustling, wistful lisper.

Forms of vapor from the flower-cups
Float, like spirits light and airy ; —
Tender mist their garments forming,
Glittering crowns and bucklers wear they.

From the purple rose's bosom
Lifts herself a slender maiden ;
Loosely float her fluttering ringlets,
Bright with dewy pearl-drops laden.

From the green and tawny leaflets
Of the monk's-hood, fiercely beaming
Treads a knight of dauntless spirit, —
Sword and tufted helmet gleaming.

On his helmet nods the feather
Of the gray and silvery heron.
From the lily swings a damsel,
Thin and gauze-like garments play on.

From the cup of Turkey-turban
Strides a Moor of lofty bearing ;
High upon his greenish head-dress
Glow the crescent brightly flaring.

Glittering from the kaiser-krone
Boldly shouts a sceptre-bearer ;
From the azure Iris follow
Many a huntsman, weapon wearer.

From the foliage of Narcissus
Floats a boy of gloomy feature ;
Seeks the maid, and burning kisses
Gives the sleeping, beauteous creature.

Wildly whirling round the pallet
In a dizzying circle swing they ;
Whirl and sing, and to the sleeper
These melodious measures sing they :

“ Maiden, maiden ! from the garden
Hast thou cruel plucked and borne us,
That we in the pictured vase may
Pining perish, none to mourn us !

O, how rested we so blissful
On earth's mother-bosom dreaming,
Where the sun-light warmly kissed us,
Through the verdant tree-tops gleaming ;
Where the freshening spring breeze cooled us,
All our slender stalklets bending ;
Where, like fairies, nightly played we,
From our leafy house ascending.

Dew and rain flowed clearly round us ;
Now the murky water drenches ; —
We are fading ; — ere we perish,
Maiden, vengeance on the clenches ! ”

Soundless fades the song ; — they bow to
Her who sleepeth, lowly bending.
In the dull and ancient silence
Softly is the whisper ending.

What a rustling, what a whispering !
How the maiden's cheeks are glowing !
How the spirits breathe upon her !
How the waving mists are flowing ! —

As the sunlight hails the chamber,
Forth the spirit forms have started. —
On the couch's cushion slumbers
Loveliest of the fair departed.

She herself, a wilted floweret,
By her wilted mates reposes;
Still her cheeks are slightly rubied ; —
Slaughtered by the scent of roses !’

L.

“ ‘ Shed not for her the bitter tear ;’ I read
Too late ; for tear-refracted rainbows gild
My eyes. — I leave her on her marble bed,
Turning away. — The very air seemed filled
With the sweet breath of flowers ; the oaks o’erhead
Chanted with leafy tongues a requiem for the dead !

LI.

“ Onward I passed to where the great-souled martyr,
Bold breaker of the captive’s chain, the friend
Of the unfriended, — he, who would not barter
His conscience off, choosing a felon’s end, —
Reposes. Torrey, bitter was thy cup,
But it has passed away ; thy jewels are made up

LII.

“ In heaven ! How sweet the memory, that we
Have knocked one shackle from the suffering slave !
Or set but one poor hopeless captive free,
Even though we did it for an early grave !
Who slew the Egyptian scourger, when he smote
The Hebrew slave, will hail thee in that land remote

LIII.

“ From all oppression ! — Onward, as I passed,
Swinging my cane in meditative twirls,
I saw a manly youth ; weeping he cast
His eyes upon a group of smiling girls
Floating among the flowers. — My memory ran
Over these beautiful lines from Grün,

‘ THE TEAR OF MAN.’

‘ Maiden, didst thou see me weeping ?
Lo ! the tear of *woman* seems
Like the crystal dew of Heaven,
That in blooming flower cup gleams.

Be it wept by night so gloomy,
 Be it brought by morning red ;
Still the flower the dew refreshes,
 And revived she lifts her head.
But the tear of *man* resembleth
 Amber that in Oriens grows ;
Deeply in the tree's heart hidden
 Seldom only gushing flows.
Through the rind e'en to the marrow
 Inward must thou thrust the tap ;
Then so golden, pure and limpid
 Trickles forth the noble sap.
Soon indeed is drained the fountain,
 And the tree grows green again ;
And full many a spring-time greets it ;
 But the cut, the wounds remain.
Maiden, in thy memory fastened
 Keep the Oriens' wondrous tree ;
Maiden, keep in memory cherished
 Him thou weeping once didst see.'

LIV.

“ Already seemed the hemlock grove to call
Me with its whispering voice — when lo! a form
As of a youthful widow, fair and tall,
Moves in the shade, like angels in the storm!
Thoughtful she walked; I hastened to embrace
An opportunity to cheer her drooping face :

LV.

“ ‘T is, Madam, sweet to roam alone above
The graves of those who have departed !’ — She
Replied ; ‘t is sweeter far with those we love,
While living in a sweet community
Of thought and action and of blended will,
To thread the crowded hall, or social circle fill :

LVI.

“ ‘I love the voice of children better far,
Than all that poets sing of hills and vales,
Of birds, whose warblings fill th’ ambrosial air
With their “delirious” notes ! — I like no tales ;
Reality has ever seemed to me
Far more poetic than all written poetry!’

LVII.

“ ‘It is,’ I said, ‘ but natural that those,
Who are themselves the poetry of life,
Should not delight in poetry : the rose
Never composes songs : — a beautiful wife
And *husband* ; ’ — here her tears began to start ;
Alas ! I feared that I had touched her near the heart.

LVIII.

“ I left her, with a sigh, and downward bent
My footsteps to Mount Auburn’s deepest dell
And loveliest pond, beneath the steep ascent
To ‘ Harvard Hill ; ’ I own I love it well,
For there I feel as one, who stands between
Two worlds, where only Heaven’s blue vault towers up
between !

LIX.

“ I sat me on the grassy brink, to list
The hum of insects and the rustling oak ;
To view the darting water-bugs, that twist
Among the lily-pads ; or hear the croak
Of wary turtle, or of pensive frog ! —
’T was there I saw, and thus addressed a *Polliwog* :

PART I.

‘ Dweller in the watery bog !
Embryo-prototypic frog !
Wagglng, wiggling polliwog !
 Wiggle waggle ! waggle wiggle !

‘ Like a comet in the skies,
Or the lash of maiden’s eyes,
Still thy waggling taillet flies,
 Wiggle waggle ! waggle wiggle !

‘ Restless as the waving ocean,
Sportive as a baby’s notion,
Still thou keepest thy waddling motion,
 Wiggle waggle ! waggle wiggle !

‘ Like a cornfield, when it rustles,
Or the shake of gowns and bustles
Still thou pliest thy dorsal muscles,
 Wiggle waggle ! waggle wiggle !

‘ As an hum-bird on the wing,
As two lovers in a swing,
So thou doest the self-same thing,
 Wiggle waggle ! waggle wiggle !

‘ What though void of father, mother,
Sister, cousin, friend or brother,
Still thou mov’st this way and th’ other,
Wiggle waggle ! waggle wiggle !

‘ Like a cow, when flies are eating
Her, or females’ fans at meeting,
Ceaseless, ceaseless is the beating,
Wiggle waggle ! waggle wiggle !’

PART II.

‘ Thou hast taught me, what a lesson !
That like thee, I, too, must press on
While my bones retain their flesh on,
Wiggle waggle ! waggle wiggle !

“ Lives of great men all remind us ”
That’s the way to leave behind us
Wakes by which the world will find us,
Wiggle waggle ! waggle wiggle !

‘ What is life, or what is glory?
Mortal, ’t is the wag ling story:
Wiggling till our locks are hoary,
Wiggle waggle! waggle wiggle!

‘ I have seen the world, and round it
Journeyed much, and still have found it
All the same, wherever I sound it,
Wiggle waggle! waggle wiggle!

‘ He, who waggles most, will surely
Scull his boat the most securely
To the port, and all by purely,
Wiggle waggle! waggle wiggle!

‘ That’s the way to win the graces
Of fair forms and beauteous faces, —
Wealth and honor and high places,
Wiggle waggle! waggle wiggle!

‘ That’s the way to stand in College
High in “marks,” and want of knowledge!
That’s the way for youth and all age,
Wiggle waggle! waggle wiggle!

‘ Man was waggled into being ;
Wagging still his years are fleeing,
Day and night alternate seeing,
 Wiggle waggle ! waggle wiggle ! ’

PART III.

‘ Oh ! thou glorious wagging tadpole !
Thou hast taught my dark and sad soul
Sweeter lessons than a glad bowl,
 Wiggle waggle ! waggle wiggle !

‘ Whaillet of the watery bog !
Wagging soon will make thee a frog,
Croaking on some slumbering log,
 Wiggle waggle ! waggle wiggle !

‘ Once thou wast a spawning egg ;
Wagging brought thee tail and head ;
Wagging soon will start a leg,
 Wiggle waggle ! waggle wiggle !

‘ Silence thou hast never broken ;
Croak nor peep hast never spoken ;
Waggling is the only token,
Wiggle waggle ! waggle wiggle !

‘ Waggling with thy ceaseless care,
Thou shalt breathe the upper air,
Green-frock’d, glittering, mudless fair,
Wiggle waggle ! waggle wiggle !’



PART IV.

‘ Typical of God’s creation,
In thy three-fold transformation
Man prefigured marks his station.
Wiggle waggle ! waggle wiggle !

‘ First an embryo, infant man, —
Onward, like a caravan,
Wiggling up from plan to plan,
Wiggle waggle ! waggle wiggle !

‘ On he soars, till lost to vision
Earth recedes, and fields Elysian
Into his soul’s eyes make incision !
Wiggle waggle ! waggle wiggle !

‘ Man is but a polliwog, —
Changed by death into the frog,
Croaking on eternity’s log !
Wiggle waggle ! waggle wiggle !

‘ Thou art small, but there are smaller
Things than thee ; — the skies are taller
Than the domes of tyrants all are ;
Wiggle waggle ! waggle wiggle !

‘ What they are compared to thee,
Thou ’rt to animalculæ
Waggling in a drop of tea !
Wiggle waggle ! waggle wiggle !

‘ Thou perchance dost look on them
With a proud significant “ hem ! ”
Sputtering, waggling to condemn !
Wiggle waggle ! waggle wiggle !

‘ As a drop is to the sea,
Time is to Eternity ; —
Time and drops are all that be,
Wiggle waggle ! waggle wiggle !

‘ Parts compose the mighty whole ;
Atoms make the planets that roll ; —
Smallest, greatest is the soul !
Wiggle waggle ! waggle wiggle !

‘ Each performs his part allotted ;
Leopards always will be spotted,
Wise be wise, and sots be sotted !
Wiggle waggle ! waggle wiggle !

‘ Angel, man, and polliwog ;
Heav’n and earth and watery bog, —
All are waggling and agog !
Wiggle waggle ! waggle wiggle !’

LX.

“ ’T was nearly sunset ; when, like Moses coming
From Sinai’s top, behold, my mutual friend
Descending from the hill ! His lips were humming
Some rhapsody, how day and evening blend
In their diurnal salutation ; and,
Before my tongue could speak, he held me by the hand.

LXI.

“ ‘ This is a soul-like puddle ! it doth seem,’
He said, ‘ to bear me back to those young days,
When, livelier than the spirit of a dream,
I and my little sister played our plays
Around a pond like this ! — Alas, she died ! —
While yet a boy, ’t was thus my youthful numbers tried

‘ THE PASTURE POND.’

‘ Oft, half way up the pasture hill,
Above my boyhood’s home,
To thee, sweet pond, — I see thee still, —
My youthful feet would roam.
How gladly did I hail the spring,
When winter’s snows were gone, —
The cheerful spring that used to bring
The grass upon the lawn !

‘ And when the gentle violet,
Or mountain rockerill,
Did first appear, at opening year,
Upon the pasture hill ;
How oft did we with merry glee,
Myself and sister fond,
Together stray, and wend our way
Up to the pasture pond.

‘ Alas ! no more upon the shore
Her little feet shall stray :
She has gone to rest among the blest,
No more on earth to play :
But still I deem, or fondly dream,
I wander with her yet,
For scenes like those, till life shall close,
I never can forget.

‘ A spreading beach and lofty oak
Stood on the western side,
Whilst high above, the maple grove
Reflected on the tide :
Here first the yellow cowslip sprang,
And dandelions grew ;
There first to sing advent of spring,
Was heard the shrill cuckoo.

‘ ‘T was here the lambkins skipped and played’
Upon the grassy brink ;
And from the grove, the looing drove
At noonday came to drink ;
Nor soon did we forgive the steer,
That pushed our cosset in —
The roguish steer — he paid full dear
For this unpardoned sin !

‘ We drew the frightened struggler out,
Upon the sunny shore ;
His fleece was wet, — our little pet
Ne’er saw such times before ! —
Here ’neath the shade our seats were made,
For study, rest, or play ;
And oft was spent in merriment
The live-long summer day.

‘ Here first I launched my little fleet ; —
How proud was I to see
The paper sails stretch to the gales,
And bound above the sea !
A sturdy acorn held command,
The smaller ones obeyed,
And grains of sand, when come to land,
The voyager’s passage paid.

‘ Not far above, and near the grove
A grotto faced the south ;
Deep in whose side did open wide
A cavern’s awful mouth ;
Where once the she wolf hid her young,
Or black bear made his den,
In times of yore, long, long before
The woods were cleared by men.

‘ But yet we thought the cavern fraught
With horrid monsters still,
Which kept at bay, when we would stray,
Too far around the hill.
Yet thoughts like these were wont to please
Our youthful fancies fond,
And doubly dear did make appear
To us, the Pasture Pond.’

LXII.

“ ’T is sweet, my friend,” I said, “ we early strung
Our harps melodious ; but methinks I see
Here, in thy hand, a new-born strain unsung
Save by the great composer.” — “ It may be,
My friend,” he said, “ that thou wilt deem me wild : —
In Heaven the scene ; a Mother’s Meeting with her Child

LXIII.

“ Our spirits are like angels, and endowed
With attributes. ‘The New Jerusalem’
Hath its locality. The vasty crowd
Of constellations, — Heaven enfoldeth them,
Even as the atmosphere enfolds the globe : —
Creation is the body ; Heav’n th’ encircling robe !

LXIV.

“ And when the spirits of the just have gone
To that celestial home ; ’t is sweet employ
To wait, betimes, upon that unseen bourne,
Hailing new-coming souls with hymns of joy.—
My pencil hath but sketched a scene like this ;
A Daughter greets a Mother on the shores of Bliss.

D A U G H T E R .

‘ My mother ! is it thou ? O, welcome to
This boundless world of joys ! We once again, —
Even as thy lips prophetic told me dying, —
Have met ! O, kiss ! O clasp me yet anew !
Thou art my mother still, and, glorious thought,
Shalt be forever !’

M O T H E R .

‘ Welcome ! my sweet daughter,
Welcome, as when from cradled slumber waking,
I fondly strained thee to my breast, and thou
With smiling eyes didst raise thy baby arms
And place them round my neck, — so welcome now ! —
Oh ! where are we, my daughter ? — ’Tis a glorious
And most celestial spot ! And why art thou
Untended and alone ? ’

D A U G H T E R .

‘ Repose we first
On yonder golden couch, — not earthly gold,
But far more precious than the diamond, pearl,
And all the gems of earth, and cushioned over
With living velvet, softer than the down
Upon young angels’ wings — beneath the shade
Of that celestial tree, whose fragrant blossoms
Of heavenly dyes perfume the balmy breath
Of the ethereal winds, — while from the fountain
Of nectar and of love, that gushes up
Hard by the roots, and forms a gurgling rivulet,
I bring thee first the drink of angels, — then
Will we discourse.’

M O T H E R.

‘ My daughter, angel, guide,
How gladly will my footsteps wend their way
Whither thou would’st lead, albeit I long to hear,
Impatient of delay.’ (*They glide along.*)

D A U G H T E R.

‘ Behold ! already, —
So swift and easy glide celestial forms, —
We have reached the shade ! — Repose thee, while I bring
A golden goblet from the nectar spring.’ (*Goes.*)

M O T H E R.

‘ Oh ! where am I ? — and in what blissful world ? —
Glorious and most unutterable delights !
Beatitude amazingly mysterious ! —
Or am I dreaming ? — ’T is a lovely dream !
Fain would I dream forever ! — How my senses
Swim ! Ah ! it is no dream ; no mortal vision, —
Even those by rapt and holy Prophets seen, —
Was filled, like this, with strange realities,
And yet so fanciful ! — The air is full
Of music stealing through the inmost soul,

Along its trembling chords ; and every breeze
Floats redolent of most delightful odors,
Such as celestial groves alone emit :
And I am wafted, as on seas of bliss ; —
And yet I move not ! — Pillowed on a couch
Than this more splendid and magnificent
“ King Solomon, in all his glory ” never
Reposed ! — She comes, my daughter ! ’

D A U G H T E R .

‘ Mother, drink :
For this it was, I tarried here alone, —
For the recording angel’s trumpet spoke it
That thou wast journeying to the realms of bliss,—
To meet thee, first of all the heavenly host,
And bid thee, welcome ! ’

M O T H E R .

‘ By what magical power
Am I transported hither ? — But an hour
Ago, and I dwelt in an humbler world,
Far different.

D A U G H T E R .

‘ Didst fall asleep, my mother ? ’

M O T H E R .

‘ Weeping around me stood the friends I loved ;
Mine eyelids seemed to close ; my breath oozed out,
And, wrapt up in a visionary slumber,
I dreamed, that I was flying, and that thou
Wast with me. — Is it so ? ’

D A U G H T E R .

‘ ’T is ever thus ;
For Heaven to holy souls is a great magnet,
Which, when the coils of flesh are shaken off,
Draws and conducts the spirit onward, through
The unfathomable seas of ether, home : —
We fall asleep, — we dream, — we wake in Heaven ! —
’T was here I found myself encircled by
A band of cherub sisters, smiling, fanning
Me with their delicate wings.’

M O T H E R .

‘ Thou, too, hast wings ! ’

D A U G H T E R .

‘ And thou ; wilt try them ? Listen ! lo ! they come !
Dost hear ? — Even now, beyond the diamond arch,
For thee and for thy safe approach, the choir
Of cherubim and seraphim, the harp
Of gold, the trumpet, sackbut and the dulcimer,
And instruments as yet to thee unknown,
With voices mingling, — swell the buoyant air,
And echo through the groves and over the lake
Whose crystal waters, beyond the reach of vision,
In gentle ripples dance upon the strand
Of orient pearls, of diamonds and of gold ; —
Where oft I with my cherub sisters sport
Weaving the mystic dance upon the shore,
Or laving in the crystal waters, or
Perchance bound over the waves in crystal skiffs
Transparent as the diamond, and bedecked
With gems and rubies, stones of every hue
Enwrought in various shapes fantastical
By angel hands ; while like the rainbow arch, —
Which oft on earth thou pointedst out to me
And told me what its wondrous beauties meant, —
Our wafting sail attached to ivory mast,
Expanding stretches to the wooing gale,

And ever and anon as in the air
The canvass shifts, in sweet succession, come
And go new images of strange device ;
While wafted thus we joy aloud to chant
Melodious songs, or hang upon the lips
Of our instructor, as he guides the skiff,
And all the while unfolds to us amazed
New glories and imparts instruction sweet ! —
Lo ! nearer and more near, they come ! ’

M O T H E R .

‘ Oh ! Heaven
Has now begun ! I hear the blissful sound
Delectable ! O, point me now to Him
Who died, that I might taste of joy like this,
My Saviour and my King ; that I may bow
And worship at his feet. ’

D A U G H T E R .

‘ Behold ! he comes !
To guide thee thither let the task be mine ;
For once, unto the Shepherd of the fold
The lambkin shall its parent lead. ’

LXV.

“ Ere this the sun had set ; the gate was closed !

A thunder storm was gathering in the sky.

Homeward we hurried, but the clouds imposed

On us ‘ no drizzling shower ! ’ — Now wild and high
The spirits of the tempest moved among
The tree-tops, and the bellowing thunders found a tongue !

LXVI.

“ There was a new-made tomb, wherein man never

Had lain, it was the fairest in ‘ Mount Auburn ; ’

Its door unhinged. By those who sleep forever

In their long home, by skeleton and ‘ jawbone,’

We pass the night ! — The awful thunders boom !

Like goblins, lightnings dance, and light the ghastly tomb ! ”

LXVII.

The Faculty arose, in mutual wonder !

Already had they waited long ; the child

Had not arrived ; — when suddenly the thunder

Of omnibus is heard ! — They stand in wild
Expectancy. — With trembling step in presses

An Under College Officer, — and thus addresses :

LXVIII.

“ Yes, Sirs ! the child bees very bad, this night !

She could not come at-all at-all ! — he took
Five pound of pills ! — he did ! — Oh ! ’t was a sight
To see it crying-like, and hear him look
So very ill ! poor child ! — I hope the mother
Of it,—bad luck to her !—won’t under-the-pump another ! ”

LXIX.

“ Gentlemen of the Faculty, let us

Retire ; ” with gentle tones the reader said ;
“ The child unbrought, ’t is useless to discuss : —
Let not our wives, like widows, press the bed,
While we, with idle words, beguile the night ! ” —
He said. Their homeward motions answered, “ it is right. ”

LXX.

Our five-weeks’ sport abruptly finds its close,

Contracted by the great contractor, time ;
My muse is weary, and she needs repose. —

Sweet maid ! Ere long a journey more sublime
We’ll take, perchance ! — Who knows, but we may give
This book one canto more, with notes illustrative !

NOTE TO THE GENTLE READER.

You may be
Astonished at the unfinished end of this
Romance : it is not strange ; but those, who see —
And there are many learnèd witnesses —
What way romances end in Cambridge, can
Swear that mine is a perfect model of their plan.

ALL OF IT.

ERRATA.

Page 88, line 6, instead of "and in sin," read, and sin.

" 116, " 7, instead of "where those," read, where were those.

" 143, " 12, instead of "FLOWER'S," read, FLOWERS'.





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